Phantom Murmurs

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Chapter One

McKinney Tennessee
2022

A peach sun brightens the horizon on a high standing beech, maple, and oak leaf treeline. Gradually the darkness and a swirling, cerulean tinted fog melts, revealing a series of grainy red-bricked buildings originating from an era earlier in time. Recent buildings throughout the Main Street area are constructed to blend in with the general panorama scene. A new coating of paint causes antique storefronts to glisten in the freshly fallen dew, becoming more apparent as the rising light gradually intensifies.

The color enhancing paint was mandated by the town mayor, elected in only a year before. The silent magisterial hope was where this crisp facelift, combined with effective advertising and marketing campaigns, would attract free-wheeling money spending tourists from across the country, and with them, big city retirees.

Ex mid-level or upper crust management, and self-employed from the same ranks, would be in possession of healthy retirement accounts, purchasing Powell County real estate and processed goods with monthly paychecks often more than twice the size of laboring or retired local county residents. The money spent on a year's worth of recruiting in these outsiders would be substantially less with much more varied use potential, than that which was needed to develop or recruit in a single manufacturing company, or to subsidize pay raises in the county workplace at large, on the white or blue collar work floor scene.

What would be the origin of this revenue otherwise, in a place where the backbone of the economy, *the production base*, had long since been shipped out overseas? Increasing taxes was out of the question, when good people struggle only to put food on the table, clothes on their backs, and keep a basic roof over their heads. Automobiles are often shared between households

throughout Powell County and beyond, due to exacerbating expenses and less than ten percent of the employment base possessing an ability to supersede even basic living costs, let alone propelling individuals and healthy families into vibrant middle-class lifestyles. Children are remaining at the homes of their parents, rather than assuming new insurmountable living expenses; a custom not witnessed since the nineteen forties, except by individuals who were failures socially, economically, morally, or intellectually, for one reason or another.

The growing phenomenon of internet based employment offers rays of possible new solutions to an otherwise ominous situation, but as of the present day, the promise is yet to broaden where anything nearing a majority of people in need may be absorbed, let alone adequately rewarded for their efforts. In a majority of cases, middle-class lifestyles derived from online employment opportunities are mere pipe dreams, in what is amounting more with each passing day as a paste together, break-stick and stack, gig economy.

Bringing in cityfied money-laden unionized retirees also allows regional businesses allying with established banks and local governments, to hold up prices while capturing a maximum profit margin from these alien money flows, rather than lowering cost of living expenditures to accommodate a drastically reducing provincial salary mainstay. Heritage locals are thankfully wise in the art of subsisting on little to nothing, with many even building astonishingly profitable cash generating enterprises at times. Even so, people routinely grumble at an observed systemic negative reality constantly gnawing away at security convictions, and never abating even in the passage of years.

What extends past this comfortably sized town heavily steeped in heritage traditions, is a huge mountain wilderness, seeming to parochial citizens as running onward for infinity. Many patrimonial Clans claim there are phenomena deep down in these woods that have yet to be

explained by mankind, although numerous county residents often harvest a majority of their nourishment from these forest depths, in an organized effort at neutralizing elevating grocery expenses.

These locals claim briskly moving, evil, kidnapping, child eating elves called *Bohpoli*, strange eight feet tall wolfmen, and translucent reptilian biped figures haunt the woods. Spirits of various types and demons called *Stikini,* are said to roam the hills deep inside the forest interior, where few dare to tread. Elders claim there are areas inside those mountains where humans have yet to trod at all. There have been times throughout the past when these bizarre creatures actually made it into the heart of town, so many claim.

One favorite story often told by elders sitting around a cozy warm pot bellied wood stove located inside the rear of *Lazarus Bryant's hardware store*, a favorite local loitering place, is of a cave-like hole in the ground on the western edge of town. One night a thick gray fog laden with a scent of freshly rendered bear grease, eased out all across the entire settlement. A loud moan or roar was heard to echo from the area in an unsettling way. It continued on, in an increasingly menacing disturbance for several weeks.

A burley bewhiskered snaggle-toothed local hunter and rowdy adventurer named Criss Carole, in company with three more fellow accomplices, decided to investigate, when others shuddered at the thought. The four vowed to their families and fellow townsmen, they would put a stop to this mounting situation. They packed in a long hemp rope and a supply of loaded firearms. Criss agreed in allowing himself to be lowered inside that stony hole, with only a single foot firmly positioned through a solidly knotted loop on rope's end, carrying down only a flashlight and a Smith & Wesson 38 revolver. The agreed upon distress signal would be a series of sharp tugs on the rope.

When the team hurriedly pulled him up, this otherwise intrepid man had an utterly horrified appearance on his face, and this strange moan was becoming a louder roar, sounding agitated. Criss raced back home far ahead of the others in a desperate frenzy, and was admitted into a mental ward soon thereafter, never speaking a single word to anyone again. He died some twenty years later, with a curse of perpetual silence upon his lips. Nobody ever knew exactly what he witnessed, but it must have been something more horrible than even a child's imagination can conceive, so said locals who knew him best.

Elders claim a huge beast with a powerful manlike torso and a buffalo head, thrives in deep mountain caves and catacombs. Shawnee legends speak of him, calling him *Boogaroo*, in a local interpretation of the native word. Bugaroo is said to be an eater of men, attacking native villages, carrying off children and women. He uses the women to first breed his own kind, and he contains the children in tightly fashioned retaining pens as livestock, roasting and devouring them, if they were male or barren females. Many good men attempted to slay Bugaroo over the years, but none were successful as of yet, often meeting their own violent, bloody end.

Mysterious entities are also found inside local cemeteries referred to as *Nalusa Falaya,* there again, a local interpretation of a native reference name. Several ageless mainstreet mansion homes of old time doctors, railroad and mining barons, are said to be possessed, especially in areas where the locals engage in secluded timeless ceremonies in attempts at contacting these entities, and the spirits of their long dead relatives. Certain individuals and families bear an inherited reputation for being *expert* in this otherwise nefarious communication with the forbidden realm.

On some foggy nights in the fall of the year, eerie glowing robed figures veiled in mysterious hoods known by locals as *Riannon,* will be seen standing on the wooded edges across certain

yards and fields, chanting strange poems and singing songs in ancient languages few understand. When these entities are pursued, they simply melt into the vegetative backdrop, without leaving a single trace of physical sign.

Skilled policemen with bloodhounds fail in every incidence to locate them, as have expert hunters, trappers, and even special forces personnel. A three million dollar bounty is presently offered to any individual who can find information leading to a valid arrest. Locals have their own opinions, but nobody knows anything for certain.

These mysterious entities are said by elders to be priests and priestesses in various spiritualist cults, thriving for generations deep down inside the mountain bowels. Souls of deeply meditating cult officials can be extenuated and positioned anywhere on the face of earth, so the claim goes. Such was part of the three hundred year old Powell County defensive system, barricading aliens, terrifying potential enemies, and liquidating those daring enough to trespass anyway.

Indeed many of these cults live by their own belief systems, and have been doing so since colonial times. Some are referred to in muffled whispers by certain locals in several quaint Baptist church congregations, as the *Children of Light,* while others are the *Children of Darkness*, seemingly denoting certain specific covens, if one will, as being with the general mainstream Powell County belief system or embracing some type of conviction standing outside of it.

The town of Mckinney, Tennessee, officially began during the late seventeen hundreds, with French Huguenots meeting at a crossroad by a ford on the Keetoowah River, which dumps into several lesser rivers, then finally empties into The French Broad River. Trappers and fur traders had been making camp in the general area ever since Hernando Desoto passed through, way back

in fifteen forty. Often old camping sites from the yearly rendezvous meadows are discovered, and sometimes long forgotten, but interesting relics located.

According to local rumors, Desoto and his men constructed a fort somewhere not far from where the town is positioned today. Children playing have long known of flat stone stacked into walls and morticed by a certain form of red clay good for the purpose, said by elders to be the ruins of his fort. Many curious adults have discovered fragments of pottery thought to be Spanish in origin. Several were sent off to the Tennessee State Museum in Nashville, but nothing was conclusively confirmed regarding origins.

These pottery fragments did hark back to the same general era in time, however, and appeared to be crafted from European clay. Razor backed pigs raised by the Spanish are also known to thrive in the area. Were both of these traded with natives by Desoto's men in another faraway location, then later on by these same natives over to the Shawnee here in McKinney? Were the old walls actually Shawnee or Cherokee in origin, or those of some long forgotten castaway straggler fur trapping or trader caravan of the past? These questions remain under investigation to this day.

By the riverside, exchanges were made between trappers with freshly prepared hides and furs, and agents bearing factory made commodities shipped all the way over from Spain, then France later on in time. Soon British sales agents lent a hand in this exchange of valuable hides and furs, and factory made products from several coastal areas. Legends abound of huge wealth amassing once upon a time on these now mid-sized town grounds.

Favorite stories told by elders sitting around pot bellied wood stoves inside local hardware stores and inside family owned old time dry goods stores, are of trappers becoming sales agents, purchasing factory made goods at rock bottom price back east on the coast, in places like

JamesTown, Williamsburg, and Petersburg Va, then selling them to fellow trappers at the yearly rendezvous for ten and twenty times their value. The poor natives then traded furs at a price far greater than what the trappers paid for these factory crafted goods.

Many of these enterprising trappers and sales agents later amassed huge unregulated fortunes, utilizing them to purchase elegant land tracts from the Shawnee chieftain who first owned and controlled the area. Later on these enterprising individuals were establishing permanent agricultural plantations and raw product processing facilities with their newly amassed fortunes, and constructing impressive chateau styled residences, many of which still stand and thrive to this very day; owned and operated by the originating Clans, who eventually transformed into a type of homespun patrimonial dynasty.

These fine folks possessed the local plantation store, selling everything from raw goods, to goods processed right there on the estate from these raw resources. Any and every kind of tool was forged in the estate blacksmith shop, to be traded in the plantation general store. Clothing was sold inside these general stores, made in plantation sowing shops. Wagons, carts, and buggies were constructed on these plantation sites, then sold back down to the general public surrounding the estate. Most importantly, all of these items could be purchased via loans taken out there in the plantation office, or downtown in a quasi-dilapidated, now abandoned bank building located on mainstreet beside the old railroad depot used as a community building, owned and operated by numbers of these Clan dynasties.

Several of these bank owning Clans also cut and distributed their own uniquely crafted coins, backed in a pure gold or silver value equal to the face value on the coin. Others attempted to back the coin value with that of arms, gallon sized jugs of moonshine, beer, and wine, or pipes of tobacco, and reloaded ammunition for lesser values. All of these clans managed to build lives of

an extravagance envied by citizens of every Tennessee county, and Southeastern states alive today.

Folks in McKinney are very proud of what they consider being a gilded heritage, all of their own, unlike any other found anywhere else in America, including the State of Tennessee. The greatest threats to this patrimonial heritage came first with the US Civil War. McKinney, however, and Powell County at large, were fiercely guarded by guerilla forces allied with none other than the heroic master commander to the West, *Nathaniel Bedford Forrest*, natural born wizard of the saddle. In the end folks held firmly on to what was rightfully theirs in Powell County, making it through this rather difficult era of the past, in their own special style of accomplishing such ends.

When the US Civil War ended, large corporations financed and backed by the foremost pre-centralized treasury of its day, the *Bank of New York*; extended rail road and textile mill operations into various adjacent areas inside Powell County. While the labor was more steady with these factory operations than what was found on plantation estates, through use of corporate issued script rather than US greenbacks, eventually residents were laboring only to pay off incessant waves of incoming debt bills every month to the company store and office general, with little to nothing remaining.

Company stores gradually took the place of plantation general stores, and due to legalities imposed after the US Civil War, the company bank was now the only one allowed in town. Life choices were often dictated from inside these banks by deviating haughty outsiders, who local folks simply could not form any type of connection with, or even understand in many instances, for that matter. Sadly, long established Powell County family dynasties and their grand estates,

commenced to wither away from this idyllic panorama landscape, like flowering clover after springtime in a mountain meadow.

Folks in Powell County, Tennessee, are survivors, as individuals and a society at large. When one opportunity closes, they instinctively know more will open. All one must do is remain alert for the possibility. One time not long ago, a tornado ripped directly through the county's heart. Several good people lost their expensive homes. Some outsiders who lost fine homes there, relocated elsewhere in the nation. The locals remained in place.

This term, *remains in place,* is defined in McKinney and Powell County at large, exactly as the terminology speaks. These locals simply took spent plyboard and two by four scraps, made lean tos and A frames, living in these there on the land tract and rebuilding their once elegant homes a section at a time, paying each section off, until the home was fully reconstructed. In three years time most of these destroyed homes were completely resurrected, and totally debt free, minus the *extortionist tax*, as the good folks there love to label it.

Being able to recount such tales of enduring resilience around community pot bellied wood stoves is a source of great dignity to the local heritage population. No matter what may come, every heritage born individual appears to instinctively know they will win out somehow in the end. *It's the way they were raised and their general methodology of living life in this section of the country*, so goes the local braggadocio.

McKinney has much that is very interesting to visit. In the heart of town sits an explicit model on a natural land rise, in an exact scale of the *temple to Apollo* in Delphi, Greece, as it would have appeared in antiquity. When corporate checks and balances preventing offshoring and in-shoring were pulled by the federal government back in nineteen eighty three, and virtually all

mining and manufacturing operations closed, city and county leaders knew survival was dependent upon establishing an endowed source of income somehow.

Retiring World War Two generation workers hailing from unionized provinces of the US, were actively seeking out areas of lower living costs. If these wealth laden persons could feel as if the area possessed something unique to an individual's interest, then they might possibly decide to remain inside town, and the county at large. In the heart of town on a hill where a dilapidated, crumbling warehouse once stood, this dazzling copy of the temple to Apollo was calculatingly constructed. The massive Doric columns and accompanying sensations of mystery, truly do complement the general overwhelming timeless atmosphere of the town and county-wide province itself.

In the beginning admission was only a mere three dollar charge. For a time, every three years it seemed, this price doubled. Now it is twelve dollars to enter this resurrected shrine. Not much of a marketing effort was needed for word to spread, and soon visitors from afar arrived. Some locals rented vans, providing convenient shuttle services from nearby hotels, to the shrine, the theaters, and the most elegant heritage diners. Many of these individuals also provided touring services, all for a nominal fee, of course! Regulation may have prevented such enterprising activity in other areas of the US, but this was McKinney, Tennessee, for crying out loud, and here blood looks after its own brood first.

When the temple model first went up, many locals highly criticized it. The premiere question of the time they demanded answers to, was from whence did the revenue originate? Were local taxes going to rise soon, as a result? Others accused town and county officials of accommodating *out-landers,* and using the local vernacular, of coddling to outsider pagan sentimentality, who very often did hold ideas and ideologies strange to heritage residents. *"We have long time*

worshippers in these springtime cults who were here from the beginning!," many would coarsely yell in town meetings. *"Please justify our need for more from beyond somewhere!"* Now these same locals seem cheerful and a bit proud that they alone hold on to a very unique space in America, in high demand these days.

Several vineyards have sprung up in McKenney and the county at large. One which is a favorite of locals and visitors is *The Old Rose Mill Vineyard*. The original *Rose Mill* was a grist mill along the vineyard creek, referred to affectionately as *Rose Creek*, of course. The fifth great grandfather who constructed the mill, had a wife named Rose Alister. There was a general store where mill products, mainly, were sold. The old store was referred to as *Rose Grocery*. It was said one could ask for moonshine, and if grandma Rose felt comfortable, she would take one into a hidden back room, where she kept gallon jugs filled with the intoxicating clear liquid.

While today the grist mill house is primarily a tourist attraction, the old general store continues to operate, selling bottled wine, T-shirts, and vineyard paraphernalia. Every now and then bags of fresh stone ground grits and flour are sold. Most visitors from afar turn up their noses at grits, though more than likely to make some sort of subtle snooty political statement, rather than for reasons of taste, so say long time heritage residents. The vineyard also specializes in its own brands of pickles and preserves, crafted and canned onsite. This particular store and vineyard are working on selling finely crafted products of all types online. Soon their own unique webpage will be up and running, claim local residents, who seem thrilled at the vineyard experience in general.

Every Saturday and Sunday from 1400 until 1900, various local musicians sing, as attractive intelligent, enticingly clad waitresses serve out daily wine specials and host locally famous wine tastings; although word of the area, the vineyard, its activities in general, and the wine tastings,

was trickling all the way down into the very heart of Florida. Soon more people would be relocating in, it was presumed by long time locals with a sigh.

Outside of town on the high banks of *Tomahawk Creek*, up on a hillside overlooking a sharp bend in this rather deep and wide water run, is a cave referred to among heritage locals as *Powell's Partisan Killing Point.* From that cave a partisan ally with Ebanezer Powell, bearing connections with none other than general Nathaniel Bedford Forrest himself, went on a personal vendetta against Federal troops, during and after the US Civil War. In the end more than four hundred Federal troops and citizen allies lay dead. He was never apprehended, and few knew of his connections until the nineteen forties. The man's name was *Old Dead Eye, Jack Hinson*. Few outside of Powell County, Tennessee, have ever heard of him.

Nowadays this cave is a major tourist site visited by dozens of people every week from all over the nation and the world, since ole Captain Jack was not the first or the last to live in it. Some speak of it among outsiders, simply calling the site, *The Hermit Artist's Cave*, to remove all appeal to emotion generated by its blood drenched history born from a disdain for those not naitve to the soil there. In general reference, this history is hastily recounted in a ring of light amusement among its additional history as being the home of native Americans, and one certain eccentric local artist of renown, George Bogart, who claimed to be a long lost relative of Van Gogh. Many relics have been discovered there and are housed in the City of McKinney historical museum.

According to the local account, Old Dead Eye was neutral during the onset of the war. People warned him to remain loyal to his own blood, since invaders and outsiders couldn't be trusted. Federal troops crept onto Hinson's farm one day, uninvited. Two of his sons, mistaking these troops for deer, decided to pursue. In their pursuit, both were callously murdered in cold blood

without warning. Both corpses were then decapitated, and the heads stuck onto ax sharpened fence posts as a macabre warning to other potential partisan combatants. From that day forward, *Jack the Yankee Slayer*, vowed revenge.

Jack knew from spending long days hunting, that the sound of shots from the cave rang out from the bank hillside and the cave, in a manner distorting any directional sound of the shot. Supplies were often ferried from ready established main stations, downstream back to troop legions inward upstream toward Nashville. Many times these large Jon boats were polled or paddled, transporting three to four men, with supplies packed and loaded in the center to a point where the boat appeared as if it might sink.

The three to four men were easily picked off from above by old Dead Eye and his custom made Whitmore sniper's rifle. The supplies were hastily collected and sold back to Powell County citizens at affordable rates, then these Jon boats smashed and used or sold for firewood. Huge Federal posse were sent out in search of this arch sniper, but they always returned empty handed. A twelve thousand dollar price was put on Hinson's head, but no Federal official ever collected the reward, and more than a few pursuers were lost forever somewhere deep in the hills.

Citizens of McKenney and Powell County have experienced much over the course of their more than two hundred fifty years of life in these hills. In every instance they have *always* emerged victorious, in their own special style. Any situation arising in the future threatening the established way of life and blood status, would be dealt with in similar fashion; elders laugh as they gather around pot belly stoves, chewing tobacco and smoking their home fashioned pipes..

On the western edge of town, where visitors from across the Mississippi River enter, is a Market House and courtyard dating back to McKinney's founding, and was built by none other than Richard Gilespi, a wealthy developer, speculator, and businessman from the era. The Market

House is a large square box-like structure containing a series of meeting rooms, sitting atop huge archways opening in all four directions. The area was once a crossroad, while the crossroad transformed over time into a circle around the Market House structure and grounds. Outward from this old Market House, is a park referred to as *Liberty Park*. This park constitutes what was once the Market House courtyard.

A five foot diameter post oak tree nearly sixty feet tall, growing and shading near the center, is claimed by elders to have once been a hanging tree, harking backwards beyond the founding era deep into pre-European native times, being more than a thousand years old. A skeleton buried beneath the old tree dating back to the year nineteen sixty, is said to have been the last individual hanged on its massive limbs. No person has ever bothered to confirm this claim, however. When the subject is mentioned around wood stoves in the rear of local hardware and feed stores, elders will laugh as they puff their cigars and pipes, smiling around finely designed long, home crafted clay pipe stems, and speaking in low tones;

"Yeah, folks hereabouts were always rough on communists and hippies back in our day. A few attempted to saunter in here unnoticed, with their greasy long hair and their goulish, disgusting ways; but their whining, complaining mouths always gave them away, not to mention the stench found in their lack of hygiene. Testing the strength bound up in a good homemade hemp rope was about all the use we 'uns could e'er find for 'em."

The entire park and Market House structure sits proudly upon a rise, comfortably and neatly surrounded by a four foot high flat-stone wall. Driving around this wall from the west, then going around Liberty Park hill, heading due east, one will enter the Main Street area some two hundred yards down the road. *Lazarus Bryant's* Hardware Store, a local landmark, is found

inside this two hundred yard stretch of road, tucked comfortably back aways from it in scattered woods, with a small fish pond behind it.

Liberty Park earned its name from Revolutionary War patriots meeting and assembling there in front of the Market House, before marching off to battle. Several constitutional articles were discussed on those grounds at these assemblies.. Thomas Jefferson was said to have attended a number of these meetings. The great militia leader, Patrick Fergusson, was said to have rallied troops on these grounds following a renowned address of Jefferson, in regard to issues of patriotism and the natural right of liberty. Following the address, Fergusson headed away toward King's Mountain, onward toward his now famous victory. Other people of local interest participating in events occurring on this hallowed ground during the Revolutionary Era, were those of Clan Powell, serving in the Continental Army, and cheerfully marching forward with Fergusson's muster.

As one enters the Market House, so called because farm goods of every type were once auctioned off or exchanged by hoards of local traders underneath the central point of these large archways and out in the courtyard; near a narrow winding stairwell rising upward into the office areas, stands the old elegantly decorated cedar wood auction block in the exact center. Today local festivals and parades are often initiated from this point, down through Main Street toward the far end of town.

Out in the park are a number of roses, tulips, gladiola, and other flower gardens surrounding statues of men important to the founding of McKinney and Powell County. The first statue one encounters upon exiting the Market House is of Thomas Jefferson. Beside his venerated statue stands a birdbath, and two concrete flower pots. Visitors often place bouquets of flowers inside

these pots on holidays such as his April 13th birthday, coinciding with the local *Planter's Day Festival, Christmas day, Fourth of July*, *Heritage Festival Day* on May 10th, and others.

Down from Jefferson's right, toward the slope on the opposite side, is another similar flower garden surrounding the statue of Patric Fergusson. Directly across from Thomas Jefferson, closer toward the center, is another flower garden filled with red and blue tulips, interlaced by a small head high tree with thick, deep green leaves, bearing white carnation-like flowers from early spring on into the heart of summertime, surrounding an elegant heavily anointed statue of Nathanial Bedford Forrest. Toward his right hand side, near the sloping edge, is positioned another flower garden surrounding a statue of Ebaneezer Powell.

In the precise center of the park stands an elegant, large timbered, snow white gazebo. Here weddings are often performed, birthday picnics enjoyed, and retirement parties held. On the opposite side of this gazebo, directly across from the statue of Forrest, stands the statue of Old Dead Eye, in its own flower garden of red roses and tulips of the same blood tint.

Inside this park and underneath the Market House archways are held annually a number of interesting heritage spring festivals, lasting from Friday at 0900, through Sunday, until 1900. Locally made crafts are sold from stands throughout the park, books celebrating the town heroes, and various shop made artifacts presented. Often local authors offer book signings at these events. Cost free tours throughout the town, large historical homes and grounds, are hosted during these special events.

A parade of Confederate and Revolutionary soldiers march down through Mainstreet from the Market House, followed by several local high school bands, highly decorated floats, local authors, movie stars originating from Powell County, and other recognized faces. Horses, cars, and pickup trucks carrying large advertising signs for local businesses, then follow. These

cheer-filled celebrations are concluded in the evening by a large feast on the grounds, dancing, storytelling and poetry readings, local bluegrass, folk music, and other entertainment.

This scene has been largely unchanged throughout Powell County and the town of McKinney, Tennessee, since the town's founding. Always, no matter what the potential threat down through the ages, the character of the town, county, and its residents with their time honored belief systems, have remained unchanged in spirit or convictions.

Anybody who doesn't like it can simply pack up, sell out, and get the hell out on down the road, as established heritage locals are fond of saying. *The four things we hate most 'round here are communists, kudzu, mosquitoes, and any old Boogaroo.*

Chapter two

Powell County

April nineteenth is always a special day in Powell County. Often Thomas Jefferson's birthday celebration is merged with this festival in its own place and right. On this day everybody has a holiday, from state employees county wide, on down to local officials, factory workers, and everybody else. Those few who don't have the day off, usually have a floating holiday available, so they still may take the time off, if they choose. The birthday of Ebaneezer Powell, the mighty, almost mythical county defender during its most trying era thus far, is the sole reason this holiday was ever established in the first place. Legend claims that during a future era of potential

disaster, old Ebaneezer shall ascend from the grave, defending his home area and his people once more again at a final capitulating cataclysmic moment, when all appears to be lost for infinity.

Ebaneezer Powell was born and raised right here in Powell County, Tennessee, in the heart of *Bogey Branch*, a very small settlement some twenty miles northwest from McKinney. Clan Powell still maintains his home as a heritage center, proudly opening it for home and estate tours. Tickets may be purchased at the front gate for the house tour and grounds. Prices are twenty dollars for the tour, and twenty for the play during the weekdays; twenty for the tour and forty for attending the play on Saturday and Sunday. Book early because seats sell out quickly, tough as the announcement is to believe in our age. Each event is highly recommended. Get tickets while they last. Cameras of any kind are strictly prohibited.

These ticket prices cover an outdoor play performance written about the life and times of Ebaneezer Powell, titled "*All For Posterity, Birthright, and Liberty!*" held on the Powell Home Estate grounds every Saturday and Sunday at 1500 hours. An evening dinner is also maintained during finalizing moments of the play. A large gazebo style, outdoor picnic banquet area near the stage is where the food is served.

Ticket prices are periodically raised to accommodate increases in food prices, which is often catered in by *Family Finn Incorporated*. A beer truck provided by a local brewery will be present on the grounds Saturday and Sunday throughout Spring and Summer months. Vineyard wine will always be available year round, served in bottles and glasses on demand. A vineyard and a small restaurant is located on the western side of the Powell family estate. Wine, vineyard apparel, and general drinking paraphernalia may be purchased inside the wine shop, along with wine tastings, and mixed cups of the family's own creation.

The general atmosphere is one of local pride and warm relaxation. The estate is open six days a week, every month of the year, except holidays. It is also closed from Christmas Eve through January third. Some Powell family members manage the stores and events, but as time drags on, more is being outsourced over to management firms specializing in such matters. One day in the future Tennessee State may wind up talking over, but until then, all shall continue as it has.

The Powell Clan played active parts in the formation and cultural salvation of the county, from the Revolutionary era down through the Civil War, and even beyond. Many local clans are related to Clan Powell, including the Alisters, a fairly prominent heritage family. Speaking poorly of any relations can elicit the ire of relatives spoken too, especially by outsiders ignorant of local circumstances.

Ebaneezar Powell owned the farm where his house still stands. His grandfather traded factory made goods, including firearms and whiskey, to both the Cherokee and the Shawnee. He raised a substantial income doing so. He purchased his lands from the Shawnee Chieftain who once owned it.

He was a prosperous thirty year old when the US Civil War began in January 1861, with the Bank of New York's gold hauling ship, *Star of The West,* being fired upon by Fort Moultry, for violating President Buckanan's order to remain anchored in place. This order was given because of an agreement negotiated with South Carolina governor, Pickens, to remain so until his precious state could gravitate back into the union, as the extortionist tariff situation designed to intentionally destroy its economy was resolved. Newspapers carried word of the battle event, and Powell's rather mundane life continued on as it always had.

War began to rage in Virginia, North and South Carolina, gradually making its way into Tennessee by 1862. Local populations were largely neutral in the beginning, but unprovoked

criminal actions and atrocities carried out against them by Federal Troops, launched a desire for vendetta in the minds of long-time resident family Clans. While Willian Page Quantrill and Bill Anderson ruled the northwestern areas of Dixie, Nathaniel Bedford Forrest ruled the state of Tennessee, down into the heart of Mississippi, in the minds of heritage populations. As word of nearby threats reached Powell County, then known as *Dissenters Ridge*, when Forrest met at the Market House courtyard asking for recruits, Ebaneezer and the Powell family quickly signed the battle muster.

According to records, Ebaneezer excelled in military ranks, soon making the rank of Staff Sergeant by the close of his first year. What he excelled in most of all was execution of guerilla tactics. When the main Federal army was on the march southward, toward east Tennessee, the greatest weakness observed was in overextended supply lines. Ebaneezer smoothly evaded concentrated troop positions, attacking stretched and weakened supply lines, eliminating all guards, and capturing much needed supplies in the process.

By the time this primary Federal military force reached the general vicinity of what is now Powell County, the men were so weakened down by lack of nourishment and constant harassment; that Powell could swing his rear guard around, making a devastating frontal assault, nearly wiping out the entire Federal onslaught to the last man, even though he was outnumbered ten to one. He did manage to capture a hundred surviving Federal troops during this particular engagement. His treatment of prisoners was what Powell earned indefinite infamy for, more than any other consideration.

His favorite tortour in the initiative was ordering prisoners to count off one through ten. Each number ten was separated. Sometimes these individuals were shot down in cold blood right where they stood. Other times they might have been broken into pieces with ruined rifles, tied to

nearby trees, then simply left to die helplessly in the blistering sun and blood sucking bugs from pain, disease, starvation, thirst, and general exposure, not to mention shock from having both arms, ribs, and legs shattered into pieces. Sometimes, even the skull was split from the back of the head, all the way over to the forehead. Should a soldier suffer in such a manner and manage to survive in such shape, his future fate would be worse than death itself.

One of his favorite tortures was having prisoners crucified, primarily on dogwood trees. He is said to have executed hundreds in this manner. He was convinced of the exact truth found in Gospel accounts, since he witnessed crucified individuals behave as Jesus was described inside Gospel accounts, including some being held under such stress they sweated blood.

Other favorite tortures included boiling prisoners alive, then compelling others who were intentionally starved, to consume the flesh. Enemy children were among his favorites to boil, especially when the child's family members could be located, nearly starved to death, then much more easily compelled into consuming the freshly cooked flesh. When he became bored of watching such grotesque performances, Federal prisoners were often compelled to consume the freshly laid dung of humans, horses, and dogs for the sheer enjoyment of Ebaneezer and his merry men.

Ebaneezer once bragged, claiming how amazing it was what one could talk a man into doing, when his choice for not doing it was to have both arms and legs hacked off, the stumps cauterized with flaming torches, then simply left laying out in the blazing sun to die. A highly motivational second choice was to have one's eyes plucked out and his head filled with sawdust, but before such actions were seriously considered, usually the person had already leaped down to feast on fresh latrine holdings, to murder his own children, pleasure the testicals of the captain's

white horse orally; or whatever the request might be, regardless of how far out or repulsive it was.

Even after the war his men would often kidnap Reconstruction leaders and/or their family members, then crucify or burn them at the stake. New arrivals from areas of the country where these Federal troops originated, were kidnapped and treated in the same fashion. Many potential leaders assigned to the county district, promptly vacated their positions when they discovered where they were going, as word of such dirty deeds performed reached their astonished ears.

The most disturbing aspect of Powells guardian tenure was how Reconstruction leaders never could specifically locate Powell nor his men. When some posse tried to pursue with their raging bloodhounds, they themselves became targets, being ambushed outright, or falling into some sort of mantrap high in the hills, set up especially for them. Rock falls and sweeping wire sets were among Powell's favorites, so his pursuers claimed. Fear from afar of Powell and his accomplices continued up through the nineteen forties, so heritage locals fondly brag.

Like a good student of Forrest should, Powell won every primary battle engagement he found himself tangled up in. He was known to have publicly stated he was possessed by the spirits of Cumulus and Ziu, ancient gods of war said to have possessed Hanible and Arminius. More disturbing aspects of his character rest in the fact that often he broke his captives limbs into pieces, constructed an altar, then burned the incapacitated men alive in sacrifice to both of these war gods. Several coven societies his men started are said to haunt the deep mountain woods, to the point where even some heritage locals fear making forays into the deep hillside tangle.

Powell invaded enemy territory, penetrating deep into Ohio and Illinois. He preferred to attack on a half moon at midnight, burning cabins, pillaging at random, raping women and children, butchering the elderly, and brutally torturing battle ready men. The Federal command ordered

him shot dead on sight, offering tempting incentives by placing a ten thousand dollar bounty on his head. In today's money values in this amount would be equal to two hundred thousand dollars.

Men flocked to volunteer in his ranks. The freedom Powell offered was unparalleled in any form of service. Not only did a man possess the total unbridled liberty to unleash any sadistic or perverted demon he might be possessed of, he bore the liberty to plunder at random, as long as it was from the enemy. Treatment of his own people and friends was with an unabidding loyalty, where he was attentive to each and every need. To double cross Powell or his forces, meant certain death for any violator and his entire family, in the most disgusting, horrible manner imagined.

On one occasion Powell and his men held up a Wells Fargo stagecoach on its way to Nashville, through what would later become Powell County. An amount of gold coins worth forty million dollars in today’s value, was promptly collected. A local resident lay in bed dying, and was in need of medical care. No government agent offered even the slightest assistance when his family appealed, but Powell never hesitated, bringing the poor soul a highly qualified doctor within an hour of him making the request, and paying unhesitatingly for all of his medicines and his family’s upkeep..

Men grew wealthy in the amount of valuables harvested from the enemy countryside. His men always had the very best of provisions, never going hungry as others did. When Lee surrendered, Powell and his followers were utterly disgusted. Matter of fact, they scoffed Lee far back as eighteen sixty four, when Forrest personally requested that Lee give him total supreme command, announcing that he knew how to win the war. Expert Federal military strategists years later agreed with the statement.

Powell and his men knew the true reason Lee, a battle hardened, successful commander, made the horrible rookie's mistake at Gettysburg; by charging tired, hungry, worn out men across an open field toward a highly fortified stone fortress, shielding a massive well armed and supplied enemy army. Lee allowed himself to be intimidated into giving the enemy victory. His two brigadier general sons, and his own dear, arthritis incompacitated wife, Mary Ann, were captured by the enemy. His son's elder servant, and Lee's future son in law were executed to put emphasis on the Federal order, now veiled inside the mainstream historical record. There was more damning information, however.

The wife of Fitzhugh Lee and her two infant children were assassinated, poisoned by Pinkerton agents seen prowling around on his farm a few days prior. Powell, being a master in guerilla techniques, instinctively knew the score without having to waste time researching facts. The order to Lee directly from Lincoln was to give the US Federal Army victory, or find his family hacked up into pieces on his front doorstep. For this crime of murdering children and innocents, the proper nonconventional military move to make, would be to condemn Lincoln as a villian into the grave for infinity..

Kidnap the filthy bastard, and simply hang him!Powell was said to gruff on occasion. On that account, Powell could not comprehend the reason why Lee did not hand over the command to a man highly expert in unconventional warfare, except that he was terrified for his family. *Punked out* as they call it now. *Why did Lee not choose to fight fire with fire?*, many from inside Powell County asked back during the time.

When the war ended, Ebenezar continued his activities in revenge by robbing banks, stage coaches arriving in from northern areas of the nation, assaulting outlanders, towns across the border sympathetic to Federal agenda, and small hamlet communities in enemy territory. Twenty

years after the Civil War, eagerness to serve with him and his support from the local population finally waned. Federal agents Pinkerton detectives searched extra hard for him all over the country.

Powell and his entire company appeared to have vanished away into the hills, never to be seen or heard from again by 1900. Many claimed he traveled west when state territories opened up, but no person anywhere could verify for certain. For this reason Powell was idealized as an avenging unconquerable hero, and said to have lived long after the US Civil War.

Nobody knows for sure, but his family claims he often returned during midnight thunderstorms and snow blizzards, to spend personal time at the family estate. Somehow his wife had nine sons and three daughters, and no other man was ever seen around the place. She said all throughout her long life they were Ebaneezer's, and nobody anywhere dared questioned it. Several of the boys appear as exact reproductions of Powell, so the accounts and a few old tintype pictures claim. He was said to have lived through the nineteen thirties, and was carried to his grave by his eldest sons in the light of the hunter's half moon, buried with a rebel outlaw's hallowed laurel of oak leaves on his cedar wood coffin, at the foot of a flat faced boulder on a hillside above his estate.

In the year eighteen seventy five, Ebeneezar Powell largely vanished from the scene. This happened to be the same year the railroad completed its task of building the town up as we know it today. The railroad passed through some ten years before. Many local heritage families assisted in building the railroad and the town. The railroad introduced new groups of people alien to the locals in appearance, ideology, and speech patterns. Most of the townspeople carried on with daily business, but there were a few argumentative confrontations noted in the records.

When the railroad town and corporation only accepted exchange in the form of company script, as did the textile mills, locals in McKinney were fed up dealing with haughty, out of town *drifters and castaways*, as they called them. Since locally owned land adjacent to the expansion areas was not in the corporation's line of targeted development, land owners were free to open their own enterprise entities.

Many did, servicing their own population in a multiplicity of ways. A new town began to surround the railroad and textile mill owned town central. These people sold dry goods, raw vegetables, farm cured meats, home-canned products, tobacco products, whiskey, firearms, ammunition, and more. Instead of corporate script, local enterprises accepted hard federal and silver coin cash. Rather than exchange cash for script and lose thirty percent up front to the corporation, heritage locals made basic purchases from their own people. Such was occurring all over the entire county.

By eighteen eighty locals were already calling the county, Powell County, since they now rebelled against their new oppressors in the same fashion as once did ole Ebaneezar, many often bragged. They preserved their own, for their own, at times charging those alien to the area two times what they, themselves. were paying for products sold in stores owned by heritage locals. Some aliens suspected they were being taken advantage of, but in many instances, could not even articulate their displeasure back down to the store owner in an accent comprehensible to him.

At times many from the outside felt as if they had entered a foreign country, where the same language was not spoken. In certain instances the outsiders were foreigners from China or Eastern Europe, who did not speak English, and when they did it was spoken with an accent

hardly decipherable. Since such was the case, when the county wide vote came up for a new county name, the name, Powell County, won with barely any contest.

Seven towns eventually grew up during the same era inside Powell County. These towns appear to be immersed inside boundless mountain wilderness. The capitol is McKinney. Some twenty miles Northwest of McKinney, sits *Bogey Branch*. With Bogey Branch being twenty miles, note it as being a day's walk, if one may cover two miles an hour in mountainous terrain, and hold out walking for ten hours nonstop. Being on horseback changes the situation from a ten hour walk down to a four hour ride. A well organized pack train would have no problem, which is more than likely why Bogey Branch began as a mountain man rendezvous site and general camp site, from the primary site where the town of McKinney now stands.

Bogey Branch is not as large as McKinney, but it is growing. While the old Powell Estate is a local attraction, there is a post office, a courthouse circled by the main street, and a line of locally owned store fronts on both sides. Being immersed inside a natural mountain landscape makes the area attractive to sportsmen and outdoorsmen from all over the nation. The area surrounding the town is crisscrossed by nature trails, maintained and operated by local heritage clans who have been in the area since the very earliest days. Locals are happy to accommodate visitors for a small fee, after hiking tickets are purchased. Trail police patrol, securing the general area and checking ticket passes for suspected violators and trespassers.

Very few locals and no outside hikers, campers, and sportsmen realize the area is honeycombed by caves and catacombs beneath their very feet. The mountain tops conceal vent exists from inside these maze-like catacombs. One catacomb, called *The Money Line*, is known by the moonshining families to connect in with all the other cave catacombs, with exits extending to the outer edge of McKinney, and onward into several other towns throughout

Powell County. There is also an extension running into the neighboring county, so it is said. Some catacombs extend onward farther than what is known, and none are brave enough to venture inside. Today's locals know even less about them than did their grandparents.

Ten miles east of Bogey Branch is a small place called *Possum Hash.* Once upon a time the meandering Tomahawk Creek flooded, destroying every cabin in the watershed area. Citizens were forced to run for their lives on higher ground, where they built lean toos and A frames. Some set steel traps in the woods, while others built homemade traps. Since woods in the area were full of possum, this was a primary catch, and possum roasted on an open fire, then pulled into shreds, served up with cattail roots and stems beside wild sweet potatoes, became a mainstay for a while. Deer cabbage, ramps, wood and rock tripe thrown in with the main dish, became the salvation of area citizens.

The area proudly sports a general store known as *Possum Hash General*. Artists, writers, and bluegrass bands gather there for its numerous celebrations and festivals. The store sells everything from work clothes, coffee, shop made pocket knives and steel traps; to guns, tobacco, and various dry goods. Local poets read poems here, storytellers have their own competitions, and banjo players are welcomed in from afar to pick their informative melodious tunes.

Every April stories are told of the town's beginning as a straggler's camp during the fur trapping era, down to what area has blossomed into today. Besides the general store, the place has an operating post office, a small vineyard, a service station, with a ring of sawed cedar log sections in a circle used as a local loitering spot since the Civil War era, according to locals. Elders spend their days here during spring and summer sitting around drinking coffee, smoking cigars, chewing tobacco, playing chess and checkers, and telling overused jokes. Few visitors from the outside ever stop by. Seeing a stranger here often brings joy to a local's eyes.

Immediately outside of town high on a hill, a veiled catacomb exit point sits largely unnoticed. Most locals fear entering inside. The catacombs and caves are said to be haunted by mysterious entities and lucid shadow-like beings. Numerous cults are also said to dwell inside the catacombs. Children have been known to play in the edge of the opening, and campers make temporary abodes there, but most avoid the place altogether.

Directly above Possum Hash, maybe twelve miles, is a small town settlement called *Beaverlick*. Beaverlick began as a fur trading station back during the seventeen eighties. This fur trading station stood near a salt lick. The salt lick attracted beaver, but it also attracted deer and numerous other game. The Swawnee used it as a hunting camp site for generations, so it was only natural where European settlers would do the same later on in time.

The town of Beaverlick is a bit larger than Possum Hash. While it sits comfortably near a bend on Crazy Woman Creek, this town runs along the uppermost bank of the creek. There are lines of polished store fronts on either side of the Main Street roadway. There is a large building utilized as a farmer's market. A liquor store stands near the farmer's market. The place has a post office building and a souvenir shop. A small museum also exists in applause to the trapping past of the area in general. While there are no grocery stores in this town, there is a flea market selling fruit, vegetables, and processed meat. An inside kitchen area prepares various types of plates for sale to incoming visitors. Many claim the sloppy hotdogs and hamburgers cannot be better anywhere else in America, since all of it is prepared fresh onsite.

One very interesting man named Earl Swagger, owns a shop in town selling cured hams, using an old family recipe. Earl is thin as a rail, and wirey, with a face nearly red as blood. He curses every other word as he labors along. He raises pigs somewhere near the ham shop, but far enough away to absorb odors emanating from the operation.

When he butchers the pigs, he lays the hams in layers on the inside bottom of a plastic barrel. Each time he makes a layer, he takes a milk jug with ten percent salt dissolved inside the gallon jug. He pours this over the ham, then refills the jug, continuing on until he completely fills the barrel. A round of ply board is cut and fitted into the barrel. Holes are drilled through the plyboard, so the water will not catch when it is weighted down by smooth stones from the nearby creek. He has nine barrels of ham prepared in this fashion every January.

From January to May, the ham remains covered in the ten percent salt brine. Beginning in May, the ham is removed, then held in an old cloth bag made from a worn out T-shirt.. This T-shirt containing the ham is covered in boric powder, then hung from an inside room ceiling in the ham shop. Here it will hang until October, when the ham will be totally cured. Once the ham is cured it is placed out for display on the inside shelf of the store where customers may purchase it.

Earl is a great outdoorsman, spending much of his time hiking, camping, and living outdoors when he is not at his shop. He owns a tract of land nearby and welcomes visitors. He also has a home blacksmith shop on his land. He makes an assortment of articles from steel traps to tongs, for sale and trade to people in the surrounding area.

Directly due west for twelve more miles is a settlement called *Place of no Return.* There is a filling station here, a small grocery and supply store selling dry goods mostly, and a Baptist church, but such is about it. This settlement has such a name for good reason. Potential hikers are drawn in by the dozens to this place for reasons not sufficiently named. Maybe it is because the place is small and virtually surrounded by deep mountain wilderness found throughout Powell County. When people venture out into the surrounding hills and woods, many are never seen or heard from again. Only the year prior more than fifty hikers went missing.

The wilderness in these parts is rough, with high land rises, deep ravines, and many places even an experienced person could tumble down into and get hurt. The area is also full of panthers and bears. There are occurrences in the area, however, that locals have no true explanation for.

Late at night, especially on a full moon, strange chants are heard riding on the wind. Haunting figures donning glowing robes and hoods, often appear on the edge of the woodline surrounding this town. Some are seen appearing in open areas near certain specific old homes. Their grotesque faces, with the piercing crimson eyes, are said to be utterly terrifying.

Officers of the law have searched the area for these missing persons. As always, they turn up empty handed. Dogs, nor high tech heat seeking cameras mounted on drones or small dragonfly helicopters, are no match for the rugged terrain of these hills. Mr. Swagger frequently declares that his grandfather warned him about independent covens thriving in the area, and an interesting phenomenon referred to as *feral humans*.

Many of Powell's comrade soldiers are said to have settled in the area, choosing to live in the hills rather than anywhere near other people in town. Powell himself was said to harbor an abiding distrust and hatred for outsiders, even when the war ended. His men more than likely harbored the same animosities, passing them down to their offspring, who were raised up in the same identical environment.

Nine miles due west from Beaverlick is the equally small settlement of *Rakeshin*. Here there stands another filling station, known as *The Last Run,* owned by a midsized elder lady with a firm disposition, named Mrs. Gertrude White. She chews snuff and keeps a loaded Smith & Wesson thirty eight revolver tucked away down by her lap underneath the desk, where she usually sits, patiently waiting on incoming customers. In the back room is a billiard table. Locals from faraway, including the deep mountain wilderness so it is said, come in here to play. One can

buy cold beer, hot dogs, and slaw drenched hamburgers, made by none other than Mrs. White herself.

Local rumor has it that Mrs. White sells bootleg liquor, and can find good men a handy woman for the asking, even offering them quarter. If she doesn't know a person, or knows a person who knows the prospective customer, he can hang it up. Many quarreling families meet at the store to dual out their differences. This explains why Mrs. White keeps a loaded pistol, other than to deter potential crime in general. People on good terms with Mrs. White and her relations, tend to do rather well in this community.

The final settlement of note in Powell County is a place called *Woolley Branch*. This area sits in a mountain dip. This dip has a slightly raised lip which is why it could support any sort of settlement when the heavy rains and thunderstorms of midwinter, spring, and midsummer arrive. In two hundred years flood waters nor mudslides have yet to reach Woolley. The town and the entire hilly branch is covered by extremely dense brush and woods. Locust wood appears throughout the entire area. The area is extremely game rich, since thick woods provide fine cover. People with something to hide have been known to hole up in the area.

Many people reach retirement age with nothing saved. When the backbone of the economy was shipped out back in nineteen eighty three, the service sector of the economy simply did not provide pensions and decent retirement checks. Now, consequently, the only check these good folks have coming in is Social Security. So they spend their days hanging out in the local library, parks, or walking the streets. During the day time they seek out a veiled niche tucked away in the thicket, then make camp. When night time falls they take up residence.

Many work part time at a local deli, at the filling station, and two work at the liquor store. These folks actually have small gas stoves at the campsite, and buy their food from the small

grocery deli nearby. Some set out box traps, and one has a fish weir down on the creek. They take quick whore house baths at the local library, wash their clothes at the local landra, and in general, don't really live poorly. One saved up enough money he could purchase his own land tract in cash. Most locals rarely even bother noticing these people, since they are quiet, relatively clean, and never bother anybody.

The GreyHound bus stop is at the local library. Many hop the bus and travel the country, often going to Florida or midsouth Texas, when winter arrives. When the weather warms, their stashed camping articles remain inside the same hollow stump where they were placed. Some find decent employment or government housing, or meet members of the opposite sex and cohabitate; commencing new lives in different parts of the nation, never to return or ever be heard from again.

These retirees form part of growing subculture throughout Powell County and surrounding areas. They live by their own codes, making special marks on poles, signs, flat stones in hillsides, etc. Sometimes they leave notes written in this hieroglyphic sign language. By reading these signs one knows where to find food, where to hide, places to avoid, people to befriend, people to run far away from, where to safely make camp, and so much more.

They also have their own food recipes and basic technical projects. A dish they make is called Salmagundi. The word means mixture. It was brought in from a coastal traveler, who once lived next to the beach. A fine wood stove is crafted from a hole cold chiseled into a castaway metal barrel found in a woodside trash dump. Most of these stoves are primarily used in an outdoor setting at night, since rising smoke might betray a campsite to any person searching for one. Only perfectly dried wood is burned inside, reducing the amount of smoke. One man had a barrel

stove inside a cave, making his abode very safe and comfortable. The smoke sucked deep inside the bowels of the cave, exiting from a vent Lord knows where.

This particular subculture in Wooly tends to be loyal, once trust has been gained. Many of these people are said to be members of a local coven thriving somewhere in the deep woods and underground catacombs. Some old timers in the past called the area of Powell County honey comb ridge, because in essence, the entire area is run through by mysterious cave complexes and meandering catacombs. Native societies thriving from days predating the European arrival, are said to live inside these caves and catacombs. Some people simply drop out of society, taking up residence inside the cave complex, coming out only at night to check traps, harvest clandestine gardens, and plunder dumpsters for castaway clothes.

Numbers of the people camping out on the sly in the great thicket surrounding Wooly are said to be coven members, laboring in the name of their special covert society, so elders loitering around hardware store wood stoves over in Beaverlick or even down in McKinney claim. Some buy hundred pound bags of rice and beans, or make large purchases of canned fish or meats. A few have been noticed purchasing clothing bundles on different days. Fish hooks, line, tools, chicken wire, and tarp are noted as favorite items for purchase, not to mention firearms, ammunition, and reloading materials. Rolls of three thirty second electrical cable is purchased periodically by some of these campers.

Police have tried for years to keep track of these groups, map out their catacombs and cave complexes, catalog faces and names. Strange events materialize, however, suggesting a lack of wisdom in such endeavors. Several hundred yards into the mountain, these catacombs and exit points seem to mysteriously fill up with stones. There were no explosions or heavy collapsing noise, little sounds other than dripping water, no distant shuffling of feet. Many who stumble

inside have stones suddenly fall on them, seriously injuring the investigators, and killing two in one instance.

Why did these incidents occur? Was anybody behind it? Were these events natural? The same occurred when catacomb walls were climbed, seeking out exit vents. A vine was involuntarily picked up or pulled upon for leverage, seemingly unleashing a barrage of basketball sized stones onto the entire group. Where were those who surely must have been against the investigators discovering them?

Questions led investigators nowhere solid. People could only speak in regards to seeing strange robed and hooded human shaped figures witnessed on the edges of woodlines near open meadows or across fields. Mysterious lucid figures emerge from the hills into graveyards, into churchyards at night, and even up into people's personal property. These figures are often spotted through windows late in the evening or the darkness of a hunter's midnight moonglow, especially during the cerulean flash of electrical storms; since rolling thunder is said to call these figures out of the hills.

Aside from these occasional disturbing unusual sightings, Powell County is usually a quiet place. In most instances the woods are simply a harmless time honored expanse to be explored, minus a few panthers, cougars, and bears. The buildings are antique museum pieces, where a style of living continues on as it has for three hundred years. In some cases the local people speak a style of Elizabethan old English.

Every Sunday local people go to church. These days they work wherever they may find it, be it at the local grocery, the quick stop minimart, or a locally owned and operated general store; and work down on the farm, as substitute teachers, or as security guards to fill in the time gaps left by often being part time employed. People hunt, fish, and trap, often in the old time manner,

since the thick woods conceals movements and people from sight. Seldom do heritage locals worry about licenses, regulations, or getting caught by conservation officers speaking in accents foreign to the area.

Things these days are going back to the good ole days, back to an age when folks who didn't hunt and gather, didn't eat. Those who feel themselves above scrounging, don't have decent clothes to wear or own the latest household appliances. Decent employment is far too scarce, wages too low, and prices way too high. The numerous local flea markets often have the best performing business. Sometimes a frying pan or stove top coffee pot might date back to nineteen twenty, but it can be had for less than a dollar, and still works like a champ.

Since late February, the world situation has been becoming more tense. Russia invaded Ukraine. Like Hungary before nineteen fourteen having a minority, near majority Austro-Germanic population; Ukraine has a huge competing and allying Russian population living in its midst. Most expect the war to be insignificant and short lived, as in Hungary and the world at large back in nineteen fourteen, but this war was dragging on in an eerily similar fashion. Russia appears to have its eyes narrowed on Israel, strangely enough. Local clairvoyants and pulpit preachers throughout Powell County fear Ezekiel 38: 3-5. The situation is alarmingly appearing to drag on, gradually intensifying. Demonic forces were again infecting the leaders of secular earth, so announced many pulpit preachers.

The US lost its productive capacity years before, and shut down its own oil pipelines recently, claiming sustaining power could be wrought from the sun, the wind, and the water; but the war overseas was putting extra pressure on the nation in the form of serious supply chain and power grid disruptions, and on the people of Powell County. Pulpit preachers throughout Powell County warned the good Lord was upset at the American nation for casting him out, denying his

existence even to its youth, for its millions of abortions, its flagrant embrace of homosexuality, and outright debauchery in daily living. The nation's leaders were teaching the youth to embrace such a corrupted ideological conviction, so claim these local ministers, and the country was going to burn in a great conflagration for these gross transgressions.

The men folk in Powell County specifically, are most guilty of entertaining loose women, drunkenness, practicing witchcraft, and speaking with the dead. Women folk are guilty of adultery, ignoring their own children, forgetting the Sabbath, and general idleness in the household. For these reasons they are going to be thrust backwards in time, relying only upon their men and being totally submissive to them. Having a liberating career simply isn't always possible these days and times, no matter how much education one has. Women will soon come to see where having a man is such an aid in daily living, since almost none can make it in the world without him, inside this imposing new, ever materializing environment.

It wasn't much of a backwards step for Powell County to remain entangled in the older ways of living. Many heritage locals never fully left it in the first place. Gardens replaced grocery stores, home based welding shops replaced hardware stores, and scroungers picked up where the others left off. What panned out in the end of this all, is a smooth, serene, holistic way of living and thinking, tough to erase from one's heart pumping system once it becomes firmly rooted in. However, local coven clairvoyants from somewhere deep down inside mysterious stalactite dark rooms, continually warn of dawning negative transformation like none ne'er before witnessed, to the very fabric of the heritage hill folk.

Chapter Three

The Indictment

The Alister family lived inside the borders of Powell County for three hundred years. Clan Alister was also directly related to Ebeneezer Powell, and there were many stories passed down from generation to generation about him. Eric could sit for hours on end listening to these tales told by elders around a cozy midwinter hearth fire inside their family cabin.

This cabin was passed down from generation to generation, being more than two hundred years old. Nobody knew for sure which ancestor built it. Some family members said it was Gardrow Alister himself, the first Alister ever setting foot on Powell County soil. He made it there following a meat and fur trail along the French Broad River, and attending the annual trapper rendezvous in the area. He purchased sixty five acres directly from an agent of the king himself.

Eric's father was the great nephew of Curtis Singletary, who proudly and fearlessly rode away with Fergusson to battle the British during the Revolutionary War. So it was said, Curtis traded with the Green Mountain Boys hailing from somewhere in the hills of Pennsylvania. The father of none other than Davy Crockett was said to have been a close friend of Curtis Singletary.

Eric himself was born and raised in McKinney, Tennessee, there inside the old family cabin, as were so many others of the Alister Clan. His upbringing consisted of time spent listening to the old stories, roaming the hillsides and deep branches, hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, raising the family garden, and attending the local First Baptist Church in town on Sunday. Eric's father farmed the land and was retired from the US Military.

Every direct relation of Clan Powell, seemed to function well in and enjoy military life, or life in some type of paramilitary or security context. Such enjoyment was commonplace throughout the Alister family. Many family members also worked as local policemen, with Powell County and the town of McKinney as their beat. Positions of management authority, or places where the individual controlled his own personal surroundings, were areas where Clan Alister functioned best.

Eric began life by following his grandfather, Benedict, around in the woods on his trapline. In this environment he learned the ways of his fore-bearers. He also learned to use materials found in the environment surrounding him to his own benefit. Often he recalls with great fondness, the many hillside spring time evenings he spent watching the sun go down over a dazzling ravine dominating a panorama scene in the forefront. In these areas he had the precious benefit of complete concealment, yet could command a full three hundred and sixty five degree view of a broad area in lethal rifle range.

His bolt action Winchester Model 70, with properly down-loaded powder grains and uploaded lead weights, could drop a full grown elk at four hundred yards like he had been pole axed, while carrying only the faint sound of a muffled hatchet chop into a solid oak timber. Such exquisite characteristics made this splendid model of rifle with properly doctored ammunition loads, one of the best to own when continuing on with Powell County's traditional lifestyle.

Licenses were extremely expensive since the onset of outsourcing back in nineteen eighty three, with this foolish present day President's ridiculous economic policies, and this unnecessary war with the Russians and the Chinese going on. NATO was Satan's one world government organization anyway, according to the preacher. This time in history, so local elders informed him, the Russians may be right. Besides that, too many folks in Powell County were saying they

couldn't figure out who was most communist. Was it China's proud man, with a friendly, slightly smiling face? Russia's macho, dress boot and leather coat wearing, decisive, realistic, no nonsense president? Or the imbecilic, crummy, pariah skelm running this country right about now, with the coprophagous grin on his face?

Game regulations imposed by rather disgusting, strange talking, feminine people in suits and ties sitting behind desks afar, and speaking in alien accents no one could understand, rendered regulation-abiding hunting far too unproductive for decent hungry people needing to live off the land. *What they don't know will never hurt them*, he clearly recalled grandfather saying. He chuckles to himself in fond recollection as his memory clearly recalls the day, his silent thoughts, and the feel of his old weapon as he held it so firmly across his lap, in his young hands.

His grandfather never missed a single detail in offering him his wilderness education. A bony sunbrowned, heavily calloused finger pointed toward a thick area on the creek bend, down hill beneath them as they sat motionless with their backs against two cedar trees. A golden sun gradually transformed into dull gray. Soon slight snaps of dried twigs were heard in a continuing occurrence from somewhere deep inside the dense rhododendron thickets on the hillside - something was heading uphill in their direction.

A hundred and fifty yards out, where the thicket withered into more scattered timber and open meadow, a nice white tailed deer stepped out with a rocking chair sitting on his head, Eric fondly remembered thinking. Eric quickly cut his eyes toward his grandfather, who very slightly nodded his head.

Eric eased the rifle butt up toward his shoulder when the deer dropped his head to feed on the patch of winter time ground moss at his feet. He braced his left forearm firmly upon his knee, as the vegetative scene through the narrow scope mounted upon his rifle, rolled with the cross at its

center shaped like a mathematical plus sign. The deer's body was suddenly in full view, chewing on a mouth full of gray-green dried moss, without ever knowing Eric was anywhere around. His rifle scope was designed to function perfectly well in both dim light, and in the darkness of night itself. The cross in the plus sign gradually fell where the deer's neck met his muscular torso. Eric drew a breath, held it tightly, then eased it out as he squeezed the trigger.

The subsonic downloaded ammunition seemed to puff when shooting from the hillside toward the open ravine, rather than crack. His shoulder felt the kick, yet there was little recoil, even though this beautiful weapon was in thirty caliber. The magnificent deer crumbled into a heap upon the earth.

He started to arise - his grandfather put out a restraining hand, pointing toward his own eyes, then nodding his head toward the deer with a slight smile. They both continued sitting motionlessly, listening attentively and watching carefully, putting deep calculating fore-thought into each and every anticipated move. There was no room for error.

What felt like an hour in the biting coolness of early spring evening passed, then grandfather gently nodded, slowly arising from his seat on the ground against the cedar tree. His stiffened joints popped as he stood. Panthers were known to haunt the area. According to his cousin, HuckleBuck, as he was fondly referred to by family and all who knew him, who worked uptown with the police department; a local from Clan Bledsole was hired into the county Resource Conservation Corp as a sworn officer of the law.

The reverberating name Eric recalled from the time hearing of was *Forrest*. The Bledsole family were always snakes-in-the-grass and back stabbers in general, who simply couldn't be trusted. Everybody in Powell County knew the truth, and was on the lookout. Most of the clan Eric ever knew even had this sneaky, butt-kissing look about them, since they were always out

for their own gain. Though he strained his mind, he simply couldn't match a face with the name Forrest Bledsole, and him being any kind of a policeman simply didn't ring any bells. It somehow seemed Bledsole was something else, maybe married into another clan. Might it be possible?

He huffed at his own frustration in recollection. This Bledsole character may know about *Lamplighter's Ravine* if he gets outside any at all, grandfather cautiously warned before the hunt. *We can't take any chances around here, boy*. *We only have one time to live free in this world.*

Organizations like the RCC (Resource Conservation Corps) and their officers, were *agents of an alien enemy amongst them*, his grandfather always said. They were trying to starve the people when store prices were intentionally raised so damn high, by forcing them to live according to a belief system not of their own design. They were hateful enemies, grandfather informed, like virtually every government agency was. *Good, intelligent, creative people are resourceful, and resourceful people don't need to rely on charity from the government or anybody else. Only misfits, sinners, losers, and fools need their alms, and Powell County aint host to any of 'em*, his grandfather always said with anger in his voice.

The RCC's worked in tandem with the IRS, whose true intention was enslaving the people to banks, grocery stores, and corporations owned and operated by US Congressmen and their cooperating allies. Grandfather classed both groups in with the moonshine revenuers, who were also a class of filthy individuals all good people should hold into some form of trap-sight. What decent folks did on their own land, with their own property, and with their own money was their own business, not the filthy greed laden government's!

Eric vividly recalled easing over with his grandfather, to where the splendid deer lay. He glanced over toward his grandfather, whose left index finger was placed over his mouth. He

patted Eric on his left shoulder, whispering; “good shot, the women folk ‘ll be proud.” Grandfather pulled his kabar Marine Corps knife, opening the deer up from his throat all the way down to his bung hole. Eric carried a smaller version of the same knife, carefully slicing through the skin on the inside of the deer’s leg. Both labored along in utter silence.

Two swift hacks from grandfather’s solid knife and the deer’s head tumbled off, while Eric proceeded to take the feet off the rear legs, leaving the forefeet on. Grandfather proceeded to sharpen a cedar stick and peel it. When he finished, Eric began removing the deer’s insides. Grandfather was careful to select the liver, the heart, and the lungs, pushing them down upon the sharpened stick. Eric picked the intestines up, placing them onto a nearby bush where tomorrow's sun would shine brightest. The stomach and the other insides he hung up on the small stump of a nearby tree branch.

Eric picked the head up, while grandfather picked the deer up onto his back by the forefeet. Now the deer was much easier to transport safely out of the woods. All of the scraps were picked up from the ground by Eric, and the blood on the ground carefully cleaned up. Now the two were ready to walk back home from their hunt.

Home from Lamplighter’s Ravine was over the mountain. The two would walk on the left hand side of the scattered trees, immediately beside the dense thicket area covering the entire mountain. At a distance through the scattered trees in the light of a full moon, both could see the eerie, almost bluish glow of a dirt road at its curb. Here the two turned towards their left, easing quietly into the dense thicket. A few hundred yards more with the moon to their backs, and the garden area, barn, and cabin home would emerge into full view.

The dirt road was easier walking with a load such as this, but far more dangerous to a point making the risk not worth the gamble. Tin foil stitched with the shiny side down inside wool

pants, cloaks, and hoodies make great red-out suits. Grandfather wore a nice one he purchased via mail back before the government clamped down on possession of such items, labeling them *items seditious in nature*. By remaining in light timber at least, or walking quietly through thickets at night, with these red-out suits on they both were virtually invisible.

Finally both made it home without incident, easing into the barn where they laid down their take for the evening. Grandfather stepped to the side, picking up an old canning pot, stepping back outside and pumping it full with water. He set the pot down on a gas burner, turning the knob on the propane tank, then lighting a flame underneath the pot. He removed the heart, liver, and the lungs from the stick, placing them into the pot.

"Give that deer head to me, boy," he said to Eric who promptly obeyed.

Grandfather took the deer head, slicing it upward from its throat almost to its chin. He reached upward into this deep gash with his bare right hand, pulling the deer's tongue back down through. He grabbed the tongue with his left hand, tugging on it, while he seized his kabar knife with his right hand, slashing the tongue as high up as he could inside the deer's jaw. This he carefully placed down into the pot as the water commenced to boil.

"We'll all eat high on the hog tomorrow, boy. This cooked, with some peppers and onions tossed in, served up with ramps, deer cabbage, and rice, will make a meal fit for a king," grandfather said as he smiled, still speaking low.

"What about those intestines we placed up on that bush, and the stomach we hung up in that tree?," Eric recalled asking.

"The intestines 'll dry in the sun," replied his grandfather. "They'll make some of the best string men ever have. All a man must do is soak them in water, wrap them, then let 'em dry and they'll hold like bonds of steel, boy. That stomach will make good fox, coon, possum, and cat

bait. Stomach taken in spring makes damn good catfish, trout, and turtle bait. That's what I have in mind, and I hate to waste anything, boy."

"Don't you think it's dangerous to go back down there, since we just hit the place?," Eric recalled asking his grandfather.

"Ordinarily I would never do such a foolish thing, but that place up in Lamplighter's Ravine is safe, I'm sure," grandfather replied. " You're right, however, a body never knows, and I am taking a risk."

"Aren't you afraid a coon or a possum has stolen both items?," Eric recalled asking his grandfather.

"You're right again, but then, I myself might find something worth claiming for myself, who knows?," he recalled grandfather laughing as he spoke.

Being inside these mountain woods was indeed total freedom, Eric sighed, as he eased backward into his deskbound swivel chair. He could literally do *anything* he wanted. He could hunt at his own pleasure, he could make and sell shine, he could park with his favorite lady friend, he could walk and explore to his heart's contentment, all done with nobody being the wiser. That's why he chose to live in Powell County, Tennessee. Yes, it was about family, but it was also all about liberty and individual freedom.

Spring time moved on as the mountain laurel and the rhododendron bloomed. The colorful birds began to sing as they flew around searching for mates. As his grandfather instructed, it was a great time for catching rabbits, fish, and wild turkey. If he didn't take his last red meat for the season now at its latest possibility, he couldn't do so anymore until mid fall; since flesh eating maggots called wolves come out and burrow into the skin of these animals. Humans had been known in the past to come down with the same disease from skinning rabbits, squirrels, and

sometimes from deer during the warm season. For a human to get wolves meant suffering amputation or death, according to what he was told. The warm months were for catching fish, turtles, and rattlesnakes when one was discovered. Meat from rattlesnake is good to eat, and the skins can fetch fifty to a hundred dollars at times.

Eric eases backwards into his chair again as he recalls his grandfather finding the rabbit trails, which were clearly spotted in the thicket. Rabbit droppings always gave them away. Finding castaway electrical wire was a simple matter, with construction sites all around town and the many trash piles found in the woods. Grandpa carefully stripped away the rubber coating, leaving the brass wire. Strands from this brass wire could be stripped down to about twelve for rabbit and squirrel, in four foot sections. Larger animals would need the entire brass or copper wire to hold them.

"Trappers way back during the colonial era used copper wire," his grandfather informed him. "It's good for us nowadays trying to get by."

For rabbits the loops were about four inches in diameter. Six wouldn't hurt, in case a cat came walking down the trail. To make the set one only opened up the loop, anchored it down solid to a small bush, then set the loop in the trail. The grass or surrounding weeds and bushes would support the loop on its edge. In half a day every rabbit trail and squirrel tree in the broad area was set. "The more sets one had out, the more likely he was to land a catch," he fondly recalled his grandfather telling him.

Grandfather had a special method for catching squirrels, however. He made what he called squirrel sticks. He took a six foot sapling he cut. He would tie a scrounged cob of brown Indian corn, maybe a foot up on the stick. He would skip two feet, then tie another. In the end he wound up with three cobs of Indian corn tied onto this stick. In the areas in between these corn cobs, he

would tie two or three copper wire snare loops. When this stick was rigged up, he would lean it at a forty five degree angle up against the tree, tacking or tying the top end down. He tried to anticipate where unwelcomed trespassers into his territory would walk, then tack the stick up on the opposite side of the tree. He virtually always collected enough for an evening meal, when the rice and beans were added in. Sometimes in place of snares he would tie large barnyard rat traps picked up from Walmart, increasing his catch potential.

Fish were caught in what grandpa called a *rock weir*. The best one was put in back during colonial times, and still caught fish on a regular basis. Knowledge of it was a tightly held family secret. During the winter the trap was opened at the rear enclosure so the fish could escape. Following springtime nesting season, however, the rear enclosure was sealed back up, and enough could be collected on a daily basis to see the family through until next fall.

During winter time all flat stones near the creek and river beds were propped up by sticks, and food scraps utilized for bait. This was done for a week or two, allowing the animals to feed underneath these stones without fear of danger. Later on these sticks were placed by pre-made figure four triggers. These sets were virtually guaranteed to work, and dynomite on coon and possum. One had no choice but to work at night around creek and river banks, since the conservation officers might be on patrol. If caught, there was no second chance.

Often Erics's grandfather would venture up into the mountain wilderness for two weeks or so at a time, with no backpack or supplies other than his rifle, ammunition, and his K-bar side knife. He carried Eric with him, showing how to use natural stone niches and cave-like dips back up into the mountain as shelter. He also knew how to make a lean to when out in the open. During cold weather knowing how to make a debris hut could mean the difference between life and death, when it was dangerous to build a fire. Snow placed an extra twist on everything.

His personal favorite shelters were limestone caves he dug out with a pick ax himself. A high natural overhang was excellent for security purposes. These he put in as a youth at various places for miles throughout the hill country surrounding him. He stored away inside his hideaways at least a hundred pounds of white rice, and maybe fifty or more with lentil and pinto beans. When he could find SPAM on sale in bulk, he laid back maybe a hundred cans of this. He also had lures, wire, some steel traps, ammunition, and an AR-7 rust-proof backpack 22. He also had boots, a few changes of army surplus clothing, stainless mess kits, factory made fire strikers, and other equipment needed for a long term stay in the out-back. Grandpa blessed his best efforts. He even had a limestone oven he chipped out in the inside wall above a hearth he also made.

When he wasn't out camping, hunting, and hiking, he was exploring deep down inside the vast maze-like complex of subterranean catacombs. Truth was the good folks in Powell County who bothered to know this area beneath their feet, could survive an atomic blast that would burn the country, from Nashville all the way back to the beach. Certain words of the local preacher from Mark 13:14 still reverberate throughout his mind when he pondered the unsettling possibility momentarily. *"When the evil abomination appears, my children flee into the mountains!"*

He often walked more than forty miles out. He boldly traveled to unknown branches. More than that, he made his own maps, using a notepad and a self-made scale to a mile measured by a walkmeter. He knew where many of the unknown vents were, and which hidden meadows the vents allowed one to exit out into. He knew what types of resources were inside those meadows, and made clear notes utilizing his own special codes. He concealed laminated copies of these notes inside several of his limestone holes-in-the-wall, as he called them. He could literally do an about face from town, walk into the woods with nothing but the clothes on his back, and live

totally underneath the radar for extenuating months on end, without ever having to surface back up in town.

He grew up hearing the tales of undocumented life forms deep down inside the caverns and mountain woods. On numerous occasions when down inside the belly of the earth walking the catacombs, he felt as if he was being watched. In the darkest distances periodically, he thought he saw flickering torch-light. Eerie hooded shadow figures seemed to pace back and forth across this lightsource, whatever it was.

Sounds of chanting voices and children laughing seemed to echo throughout the chambers around him, when he spotted the winking orange light and the shadow movements far up ahead. A few times he spotted a serious hardened translucent face materialize on the catacomb wall, glaring directly at him as he eased silently along. His heart raced with fear and excitement, but he was compelled to move in for a closer examination, walking near to the catacomb wall opposite of the translucent luminescent faces, for security. A hard lump formed in the center of his throat and inside the pit of his stomach. His breathing picked up pace.

Soon he could determine words were being spoken, but in a language he didn't understand. There was a flame on the floor around a stone corner, but he couldn't yet view what was occurring. The words seemed to increase in volume as he neared.

"O, a Dhé Cumulus, glèidh sinne agus ar dòigh-beatha air son neo-chriochnach- adh bith-bhuan.Na dean tròcair air ar niamh dibh, na tour deirc do ar fàilligidhean. Oir thug thu dhuinn neart, gliocas, agus misneach," spoke one standing individual with a crimson band around his hood. Eric assumed this individual to be a coven grandmaster.

He neared the stone corner. His fear was mounting to a point he wanted to cut and run into the opposite direction with all the strength he possessed. Something on the inside pushed him

forward, as if he were motivated by the hand of God Almighty himself. Soon he could peek around the corner from inside the stone shadow, revealing a startling, almost grotesque world before him.

A circle of thirteen sable cloaked and hooded males sat around a large oak wood flame. Their faces appeared utterly wicked, if not painted; with black faces on one half, and the other half sky blue. Around one eye on the black half was painted a white ring, and around the other on the blue half, a blood red ring. Maybe it was the firelight, and some form of hallucinating atmosphere affecting the cave in conjunction, bearing upon his psychology; but these people, if they be such, appeared almost translucent. He couldn't totally comprehend what he was witnessing. They bowed their heads and held their hands in front of their faces, with the palms outward and opened.

"A Dhé rùin Cumulus, tha aois ar saoraidh chumhachdaich a' dlùthachadh.Faodaidh sinn a bhith ga faireachdainn.Tha sinn a' faireachdainn gu bheil e glè," again spoke the grandmaster in a heavy raspy voice, with his head bowed toward the flame and his hands raised, with the palms opened.

{Oh, dear God Cumulus, the age for our mighty deliverer nears. We can feel it in our very being. Reveal the anointed one you have manifested to make war against our fierce, most threatening enemies yet. Hark ye all! We sense his being very close at hand, nay, even in our very midst.}

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Eric was a decent student during his school days. He knew he could have done as many in his home area did, passing through his life wrangling a living from the mountains themselves. Besides shine, furs, fish, meat, and catering to the needs of strange quibbling tourists; there were

fossils to be found, firewood to be cut and sold, people needing nature and hunting guides, camp counselors, and even careers to be had in mountain survival instruction.

On one aspect or another, he dabbled in all of these at sometime throughout his eventful life. He thought about joining the military, especially the navy, but couldn't bring himself to step across the line and make the commitment. For the longest time he didn't know exactly what he was going to do with his life.

In grade school he made honor roll and BATA club every nine-week grading period. During that era of time, many around him chose to work in the mines, as had their fathers, and their fathers before them. Something deep on the inside told him not to bother with it. He'd rather spend his free time reading romanticism era novels and trapping on the weekends. His favorite novels were torn between Pride & Prejudice, and Frankenstein. Something about Edgar Allen Poe and Daniel Defoe's works held an appeal with him. On the bright side, he also held a lifelong fondness for the works of Hemmingway.

By the time he graduated highschool, he was almost sure he wanted a career in education. He put in at Powell Central, a college established during the reconstruction years. Here he studied history, education, and administration. His grandfather knew the principal at East Powell High, and landing a teaching job there was not difficult for him to accomplish. On the sidelines, after much struggle, he finally obtained a master's degree in education administration. He applied for the position at East Powell High, since their assistant principal, Andrew Holesteine, was moving on. With his superior grade in work evaluation, and his unerring references, landing the position was never an issue with him. Soon he wrangled a much better paying career.

Having a better paying job offered much more opportunity to advance as a person and a citizen. A small river was dammed up back in the 1950's on the west side of town. A

hydroelectric dam was placed in, serving the town community and the county population well. A small lake consequently formed, with an edge running up to the city limits in McKinney. This area was highly coveted by city and county leaders. Old man, Lazarus, owner of the famous hardware store, and many more individuals of success and importance, owned a highly coveted place beside this lake. Big city retirees frequently offered twenty percent above the asking price for any one of these places by the lake. Owners felt as if they sat on a gold mine, and many had attitudes to go along with it. Folks didn't call it *The Gilded Side of Town* for nothing.

Eric purchased a three acre land tract here. He constructed an elegant mansion home. The house was built in the classical style, being two stories, with a balcony porch above and below. A wrought iron lamp made in the late eighteenth century style hung above the entryway from a black chain. The lamp utilized an electric light in candle shape. The doors were heavy, hand crafted, oaken double doors.

The yard was filled by azaleas, rhododendron, daffodils, tulips, and gladioli. Large live oak trees shaded the yard, while weeping willow trees surrounded his backyard pond. Underneath these trees in certain specific areas were concrete bird baths, the busts of famous people, such as George Washington, several noted artists and writers. There was also a concrete figure of Athena in the center of his yard.

Eric built his new house piece by piece, beginning with the foundation, using a local contractor recommended by his assistant principal. He framed the house up, paying for that in hard cash. He had the plumbing and electrical work put in and completed, paying cash for the entire job. Finally the home was completed when the roofing and siding was done. When he paid his final payment, the home was his, other than the monthly insurance and the yearly tax bill.

These tax and insurance items were indefinite, causing his otherwise quiet wife to question whether or not they truly owned the property to begin with.

Frequently over the years he hosted elegant dinner parties on his grounds at his home. Town officials attended, as did individuals from the Powell County board of education. Sometimes he managed to invite a local artist, musician, or author growing in prominence inside his small slice of the world. All of these people attending had an intensive interest in the arts, as did he himself. He supported his local artistic organizations and struggling individual artists.

Eric continued attending university, eventually obtaining his master's degree in educational management. Within five years the principal finally resigned, claiming other duties were calling him. Most felt an investigation into accusations of embezzlement were most of what led to the eventual resignation. When Eric applied for his position, there was hardly any contest, as if the move was almost forthcoming.

The people at the board knew his family from far back in time. Matter of fact, the superintendent, Jacob Ludlum, was raised up behind the old Wright Brothers Cotton Mill, in a small wood-framed cabin styled mill-hill house. A time and weather beaten train track passed in front of the house three hundred yards or so out, up against the woods. Eric's grandfather and his father once walked the tract from there in the heart of town, over to the mill-hill cabin where the Ludlums resided.

Today inside Eric's office, he had some leisure time, and he caught himself easing backward into his dark brown leather swivel chair, reflecting on his life. He didn't know why. Maybe he subconsciously longed for the good ole days. He is only thirty years old. He is muscular, thin and tall, since he frequently works out. He has jet black hair he slicks backward atop his head, like many of the youth did in his own day. He glances into the mirror and cannot help noticing

where his face is somewhat pockmarked from spending so much time outside in the weather and the sunlight. He stands before an office mirror buttoning up his new sky blue sports shirt, while he checks the zipper in his crotch area..

The door abruptly opens to his office. His secretary, Doris, enters, walking over to his desk, tossing on a handful of neatly folded papers tucked away inside open yellow envelopes.

“What’s up?,” he asks her with a deep voice, as he brushes his coat and pants.

He casually walks away from the wall mirror with smooth steady strides, back toward the seat at his desk.

“These are papers from the board addressed directly over to you, and I was told to stress their importance, sir,” Doris announced in a conditioned monotone voice and void of facial expression.

He grabs the papers, opening and reading the first one aloud.

“Dear Mr. Alister, we must meet on the nineteenth of this month. Three months ago we requested, per state mandate, the historical directional approach regarding instruction, but slanted away from the outdated angle of consideration, to DPE’s (Department of Public Education) agreed upon new perspective. According to our investigative records, you have yet to comply with this mandate..

“What? What kind of ridiculous garbage is this?,” Eric huffed as he turned up his lip.

Eric’s college major was in history and education. He is very knowledgeable about the US Constitution, and firmly believes in his First and Second Amendment rights. He runs the school as a well organized strict disciplinarian, yet is fair with the teachers and his subordinates.

“Read on,” spoke his secretary. “They are calling your hand out on this matter. On the nineteenth they are going to demonstrate to you specifically how this new perspective in

historical instruction is to be facilitated. Refusal to cooperate from either you or the teachers in question, can lead to serious punitives, Mr. Alister."

"I can't believe this!," Eric snapped as he sighed. He continued reading along in silence.

History was to be taught from a condemning stance, of local and state heroes being villains, since they sought to oppress natives and slave populations. Capitalism descended from slavery, so therefore it was exploitative.

Obviously the implication here was one of socialism replacing capitalism, but where was the money to facilitate these programs going to originate? People such as Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, John DuPont, and the Vanderbuilt family were not going to forego their inheritances or wealth earnings to facilitate it. Beside that, way back in nineteen eighty three when the production base was outsourced and downsized; subsidized wages and housing, right along with free basic health insurance, should have automatically been forthcoming. There were no real jobs, for crying out loud! All the government ever did was lie about everything in regard to what was going on, so why should any person seriously believe they were going to do anything positive to address these same enduring concerns more than forty years from the day?

Parents of local children objected bitterly to the policy in other county schools, asking school leaders since native tribes oppressed one another, and ex-slave communities often were more than sixty percent slave owners themselves; why must their own children learn outright lies supporting some form of socialist political agenda, intentionally designed to damn their own heritage past? "Damn your socialist propaganda!," they would scream. Many school leaders in nearby counties often lashed out at questioning parents with criminal charges of incitement and threat.

“This garbage is crazy!,” Eric fired. “I feel as if I am back in nineteen twenties Germany, when schools there commanded for students to be taught that Jews were the cause for the nation’s problems. I can readily observe where in this dawning American version of Germany’s National Socialist system, all of us are at the top of the coming target list. There is nothing specific about Jewish folk in this trash mandate, but deep down I feel they shall be loaded up into a future cattle car, right along with all of us Anglo-Saxons. It's only that these leaders don’t wish to incriminate themselves in saying so, since it’s not politically correct to call Jewish folk out, as it is with us.

“No wonder the orthodox are exiting out of New York City in never before seen droves. They obviously know history, especially in regard to target list developments and authoritarian tyranny such as this. They clearly see the evil insatiable monster ahead in the bushes, on this highway to hell our once great nation is presently treading down.”

The eyes of the office staff widened in utter disbelief at his remarks, as they uncomfortably glanced around at one another. A pause of silence ensues.

“Mr. Alister,” abruptly thunders his overweight assistant, Wade Holzeman, a recent arrival from some California big city, claiming to have roots here in Powell County. “I personally don’t feel that's a fair statement in regard to what's being requested of you, us, and the school here. We all understand your frustration and your disagreement with the mandate, but progressive change must come; first to the school, then to the people gradually, and finally to the county at large.

“Then, and only then, shall Powell County, the surrounding counties, the State of Tennessee, and finally the nation at large, live to witness brighter days, sir. Automation has robbed us of potential gains made in resurrecting the production base. Laws will never be changed to prevent corporations from offshoring to take advantage of regulation free operational environments, and

foreign slave labor contracts negotiated and drawn reducing labor cost to mere pennies on the dollar per hour. Such grossly low wages may also be paid out without supplying any kind of worker benefits. Honestly, when all of us get real about this subject, the only rational conclusion is one of socialization being our national salvation. ”

Chapter 4

Rumors

Eric's grandfather showed him how to plant a garden years before as he grew into youth and manhood. He loved working outside during spring planting, and midsummer to fall harvesting times. Chopping the ground with his grubbing hoe and putting the rabbit manure out actually had a relaxing effect on him, causing him to forget the cares of his workplace. Sometimes he would speak to his plants as he labored along. He caught himself feeling they actually heard and understood him.

For most of his life he planted corn, beans, and squash. These were the basics of gardening, when one had the space to grow them as he did. He tended to grow field corn native to the area, and zucchini squash, since it was produced in such abundance regardless of negative environmental circumstances. In the fall collard greens could carry one through right on up to the onset of cold weather.

One of the best crops he ever learned to plant were sweet potatoes. Once the crop was ready to harvest, one could dig a furrow, line the bottom and the sides with straw, place the potatoes inside, cover it with straw and the whole deal with freshly taken soil, and then one had a pile where he could pull potatoes all through the entire cold weather months.

Something was going on at work and throughout the county at large. He wasn't sure exactly what, or how he felt about it, but something dark and vile was amiss. Usually people laughed and freely spoke to one another, but now they behave as if they are afraid to speak out. He was told things were different around the county, but he hasn't paid any special attention, since his small corner of the world continues on as it always had. Every weekend when he finally did have some

free time, he often spent it down in old man Lazarus Bryant's hardware store, sitting around the woodstove, drinking thick black coffee and chatting with the elders. This was where he received the lion's share of his information about happenings around the county.

These elders were the real mountain men, he quietly thought to himself, the get down and dirty kind who knew how to do anything. They could plant, can, pickle, and make do from what most considered to be scraps. They knew all about hunting, trapping, how to tear a motor down blind folded and put it back together again. New vehicles complicated such efforts, so most of these men invested in recently rebuilt older models, so they could keep them highly maintained at all times without outside assistance.

One man everybody called Comanche, wore an expensive white Stetson hat, slightly fading blue jeans, and a perfectly starched and ironed western shirt. It seemed as if he was always sitting there in the tied bottom chair behind the woodstove when Eric walked in. His face was covered by marks aging men often get who spent their years outdoors. He smiled broadly when Eric walked inside.

"Well there he is," Comanche announced as Eric walked up to take a seat in the nearest empty chair.. "We were just talking about you, fellow."

"Oh yeah?," Eric asked, as he pulled his chair up.

"Ya heard about all this riff-raff going on around here, haven't ya?," Comanche said as he packed his home-made briarwood pipe with his left pinky.

"Can't say that I have," Eric replied.

"They are saying people shouldn't own property," informed Commanche.

"Who is saying that?," Eric asked with a slight laugh.

"The county officials are debating it right now over in City Hall."

“Well, I’ve said for years none of us owned property anyway. I mean, we actually lease it from the government. Americans don’t really own anything anymore,” Eric replys with a chuckle.

“No, I mean they are talking about making it where all of us just rent forever from the government, or some corporation working with them.. There is no payoff, we just spend our lives renting. Then if somebody decides he wants to build something on our land, there is no court battle or opposition, because nobody owns anything anyway,” Comanche told him. “They can move us all when and where they want then. They are even talking about forcing us all into some big city enclosed in high barbed wire fences way off somewhere. ”

“I haven’t heard about this messed up mess,” Eric replied with a laugh and a smile.

“A lot of people haven't heard, and there is all kinds of mess going on in City Hall that county commissioners are wanting to force on us. It almost makes it not worth trying to own anything,” Comanche smiled and said as he lit up, puffing on his clay pipestem.

Eric didn’t smoke, but he always liked the smell of fresh pipe tobacco, especially cherry flavored.

“I know the schools are getting messed up. I can certainly tell you that much. They are wanting me to force the teachers into saying the local, state, and national heroes were all bad people. Jefferson was a slave owner, so he was bad. Ole Andy Jackson was a slave owner and an Indian fighter, so he was bad. Never mind the fact that he personally adopted two native children. Basically, they want teachers to teach that us white folk are the cause for all the nation’s problems, never mind the fact that corporate greed, outsourcing and in-sourcing, is what really messed this economy up for everybody,” Eric curtly informed him, “and furthermore, it was done intentionally for that purpose, and to fleece billions away from the American people.

“Sounds like what was going on in Germany with the Jews, after World War One,” Commanche says as he continues puffing.

“I said the same thing,” Eric laughs.

“Are you going to have ‘em teach that garbage to the kids?,” Comanche asked .

“I don’t plan on it. I’m going to make these authorities think I will, but then simply not follow through on it. I don’t see them sending in monitors to observe if I am teaching from this political perspective they are commanding for me to.” Eric replied.

“Do you think they could condemn you, based on whether or not you conform to this political agenda being forced?,” Commanche asks in earnest.

“Political inquisition?,” Eric chuckles. “That sounds about right. I suppose I’ll be finding out here before long. I’ll surely keep all of you informed on the matter.”

Back home in the garden his five year old son, Kevin, races out of the house to greet him as he labors along. He was showing him how to walk in the ways of his father, like his father and grandfather had shown him. He shows his son how to fish, how to hunt, how to plant, how to fight, and how to staff-fight, like his father and grandfather did for him. He hopes that world would be there for his son, the same world of liberty he lived to enjoy.

The back door on the house abruptly sprung open. Out steps his wife of nine years, appearing as a centerfold girl all wrapped up in her bathrobe. He met her back in high school during his eleventh grade year at a homecoming ball game. They dated all through highschool, seldom interrupted. She attended college the same time as he did. They broke up twice, but not for long. Her parents were business people. Half of their origins were outside of Tennessee state, in Michigan. Her shoulder length sandy blond hair seems to dance in the wind as she walks toward them.

“I saw Kevin walk out the door. I knew I couldn’t turn my back on him for long,” she says as she briskly walks toward him, wearing a smile. She meets him up close, kissing his lips. “How was work today?”

“It was o.k. Another day on the job.”

“What's wrong? I have the feeling something is out of balance,” she stares at him and says.

“I have a meeting tomorrow with several board members. It's something about mandates for teachers instructing subject matter according to prevailing political agenda.”

“Do you have a problem with that?,” his wife asks.

“Yes, when political agenda runs contrary to hard facts.”

She never offers further reply, she only stands, gazing blankly into his face.

“There has been much going on throughout the county. I hear some of it. I don’t know what to believe anymore. From the little bit I’ve heard, I gather something from City Hall is in the works for being forced down on everybody. State supported school is where indoctrination begins. I know it's like that in Russia, China, Cuba, even in England, Spain, and Canada. Why would the US remain different, Eric?”

“Because we are different, that's why Breanna. Being able to soar like the eagle, and run like a twelve point buck or a wild stallion, that's what true freedom means, it's in our blood. We, as individuals, have a right to excel in every sense of the word! Out of all America, it's in our blood far more here in Powell County. We’ll never simply lay down and give it up. You are aware of that, I know.”

“I know the history Eric, but many other people live in Powell County now. They don’t see everything the same way. They favor the group at the expense of the individual person. For example, they are claiming the group would fare better if no individual owned property.

Concerns of the environment and food production reaching its fullest capacity for all, could then be addressed from proper perspectives," his wife calmly responds.

"Expect anything, if a push for this absurd political agenda comes," Eric replies to her with a somewhat concerned look on his face as he glances around.

"Old man, Wiley Parker, next door, claims he's seeing the Riannon more. He's hearing voices afar in the darkness, from over the fields on the edge of town, toward the woods, chanting in a language he doesn't understand, Eric. Several coon hunters eased out last night in an effort to locate the source. Every direction they entered the woods from, the chanting voices seemed to be originating from the opposite one."

"I'll speak with him tomorrow, if I see him out," Eric replies.

"In town at the local church, the preacher says he's seeing shadow figures moving around in the darkness near the graveyard in front of the parsonage where he resides. The wife of the county manager claims at night, when no one is around at her home, she feels she is being watched," his wife continues to inform in a slightly muffled voice. "People are becoming afraid to speak the truth."

"I can gather clearly where something is definitely a stir, Breanna. Something has the dark side, the old county guardians, on edge. We may need to keep an eye on everything."

The sun has risen above the tree line and it's light enough to see outside. If today Eric was hunting, he would already have been down in the woods. He stands before his mirror, smoothing his pants and his coat. Normally he didn't go to such pains in dressing, but today he was meeting with officials from the county Board of Education. They would notice every detail, making inferences always to the negative, at even a slightest suggestion of possibility.

Unfortunately, most board members did not originate from among the heritage population inside county lines. These people, largely speaking, were outsiders from afar, or *out-landers* pipe smoking elders sitting around the pot-bellied wood stove in old man Lazardas Bryant's hardware store are fond of saying. Eric firmly realized a while back where these people had little respect for local traditions or local life ways of any type. They only relocate into the county from some faraway hell hole, to hear them talk, whine about negative comparisons between the way the county does things and the stink hole they left from, worm their way into the overall county political system, then work overtime to make everywhere they move into like the place they escaped from. When they finally mess up the new place, making it exactly like the one they exited from, they move on and do the same thing to another decent place to live. Eric and others found themselves thinking these people must be on some type of personal crusade or plot, intending to ruin the entire nation.

The five mile run to the high school where Eric worked was covered in a snap. He pulled his economy car into the parking place directly out from the front door, parking it. To his astonishment there were already a few long black Cadillack type vehicles in the school parking lot he wasn't used to seeing. He didn't really have time to investigate. He walked up to the school door, thrust his key into the hole, then walked inside with his black leather briefcase held tightly in his right hand. In the distance he could hear talking from the office area. He rounded the right hand corner of the hall.

The office door was already open. A busty bleach blond haired lady stood by the entry way he had never before seen. He glances her over with a puzzled look on his face, nodding.

"Hello, and good morning," he said.

"Good Morning to you, Mr. Alister," the lady said in an accent not native to the area. He caught himself feeling that the woman must be Canadian, for some mysterious reason.

He steps passed this woman, on into his office. Behind his desk sat the county Superintendent.

"Good Morning, Mr. Ludlum," Eric said with a nod.

"And good morning to you, sir," Ludlum replied.

Eric glanced around. There were four other men in the office surrounding the Superintendent. Two of them were armed policemen.

"It appears this meeting between us has lots of invited company," Eric said, forcing himself to smile.

Ludlum chuckled.

"Eric, this meeting between us is a huge deal. We've known one another for a long time. My family is part of the heritage clan here, just as yours is. Our links reach way back from the Revolution, to the ranks of ole Ebeneezar Powell himself and the guerilla wars during our great civil struggle, right on down to the bootlegger wars and the present day. We both can be frank with one another, right?"

"Sure, if you say so, Mr. Ludlum. I've always been frank and out front myself, to be quite honest about everything."

"I know you, and that's why I must be frank and out front with you, Eric. The dirty, double barreled bleach blond by the door there is named Angela, Angela Westmoreland. She works with the local and national media. She also coordinates with the Washington office of the United Nations," Ludlum spoke with an air of casual sarchasm in his voice and general demeanor.

Eric forced a smile, then nodded greetings to her. She in turn smiled, then nodded back in his direction.

“The gentleman to my right here, is a UN coordinator who works with the local county and city planning board, helping merge UN concerns with those of the county at large. His name is Mike Wiseman.

Eric nods, saying “hello.”

“The young lady to my left here is Reda Adams. Mrs Adams is a facilitator between the UN, the school board, the city planning department, and the citizens of Powell County, Tennessee. She plays a huge part in organizing these transformational events, with concerns of resource usage and the environment reigning supreme above all other concerns.”

Eric nodded and smiled at the lady, but she returned him a hard, inflexible glare. A sensation bolted through him indicating where something obviously was amiss here, and this woman wasn’t happy with concerns regarding himself. The air now almost felt heavy with tension.

“Eric, you need not worry about running the school for at least half a day here. We have it all under control,” Ludlum says as he glares at him directly in the eyes..

“Well, that’s so nice of you,” replied Eric.

“Eric, I don’t know how to say what needs to be said, other than to be point blank and blunt about it. I don’t know how aware you are of it, but there are huge changes presently occurring throughout this entire county, the state of Tennessee, and the whole nation at large.”

“I’ve heard a bit here and there, but nothing to no great extent,” Eric firmly replied.

“The great state of Tennessee is unique. We take pride in our traditions and our time honored ways of living. We don’t like giving up or backing down from what we view as oppression. I mean, you know our great history, Eric.”

“Sure, it's part of who we are,” Eric replied.

“The problem is our ways of living are in conflict with concerns as applied to the people as a whole. I mean, our history we exalt in, is the history of only a single group. Today Powell County is made up of many groups, from many places across the nation and the world even. Our heroes are not the heroes of everybody, Eric. Matter of fact, to many, our heritage heroes are treacherous villains, for one reason or another.”

“Well that’s their problem,” Eric fired in a sudden heat. “Why should we bend our values over toward their personal concerns? If they don’t like it, they can pack up and move back into where it is they came from, to be honest here, Mr. Ludlum.”

“No! It can’t be that way, and it’s not going to be that way here in Powell County, or anywhere in the great state of Tennessee,” Ludlum fired with firmness inside his voice.

“They don’t respect us,” Eric said.

“No! That’s not the case here.” Ludlum sighed deeply, leveling off directly into Eric’s face with a hard glare. “Look here Eric. We are all fighters. We hail from a splendid fighting tradition. We brutally resist change when it threatens our way of living and our personal convictions. Wasn’t the name of the man who lashed out twenty years ago or so, shocking the nation, Rudolph, or something like that?”

“My memory fades,” replied Eric as he hung his head, “There were several who originated from around here, striking in other places. Seems as if he was one of them.”

“Well, my point is that he didn’t make it far resisting. The social transformations he battled against still occurred. The immigrant floods still poured in. People with different religious and moral convictions still called the area home, here and in the counties surrounding us, and these resistors are sitting up in a maximum security prison or laying in a graveyard somewhere, Eric. Their great heroic fight was for nothing in the end.”

“Mr. Ludlum, I don’t get it. What are you driving at here?”

Ludlum drew in a deep breath.

“Mrs. Westmoreland!”

“I’m on my way,” she announced as she closed the door.

Already loud students were pouring in through the front doors of the school. Herself and all the accompanying personnel walked into the office area. Reda Adams maintained the hard inflexible composure on her face. Mike Wiseman, who said nothing thus far, pulled a compact recording camera from his coat.

“Mr. Alister,” Ludlum announced, “change has finally arrived at West Powell High School, and Powell County at large. You will go down in history as one of its great facilitators. Think about that for a moment here!”

Eric made no reply, he only gazed toward the man holding the camera, while occasionally glancing around the room.

“Mr. Alister, you are among the first officials to be presented with the already famous CUCC document,” Ludlum stated as Adams removed the paper from its envelope. “You should be proud. You are making history here! Look Mr. Alister, you are being recorded for posterity.”

Eric carefully read over the document, slowly shaking his head.

“What on earth! This document is demanding where I reject in writing the US Constitution, swearing allegiance to the UN Constitution of Universal Collectivist Confederation. When I sign this, I am rejecting the entire idea of national sovereignty.”

He glanced upward toward the school officials with an astonished look on his face.

“Are you out of your mind? I have people in my family who fought wars for this constitution and nation as it is. My great uncle, Phillip Johnson, fought on two battle fronts during World War

Two when he was in the Marine Corps. He charged up the beach at Normandy. When they had taken Normandy, he was shipped off toward Iwo Jima in the South Pacific. He stormed up the mountain at Iwo Jima, he and his entire platoon, directly into the face of a concealed pill box, and a fifty caliber machine gun mounted on a swivel. When the first marine reached the summit and struck the US flag after using a hand grenade to neutralize the pill box threat, Uncle Phillip turned to count more than a hundred men dead directly in his avenue of charge alone. He and his small platoon came out without a single scratch. If he was here right now, he would unhesitatingly tell you it was the hand of God Almighty who delivered him from harm. ”

Ludlum sighed deeply. Mike promptly stopped the camera.

“Well, take a few moments. It's a big pill to swallow, I know. Then we’ll speak about the rest of what is expected of us, and the citizens of Powell County.”

Eric glared down at the document before him, then glanced hard back toward Ludlum and the others. Was this event real, or was it simply being staged to observe a reaction in him and others? He continued reading. He read the lower lines three times. He could not believe what he was viewing before his very face.

“I’m afraid it's all true, Mr. Alister,” Ludlum said. “The local, county, and state governments are totally held in collectivist control. UN endorsed agenda must be mandated and held to, without exceptions. I know you are an outdoorsman. So are we. I love to hike, camp, and stroll through the woods. It's just that I’ll no longer be able to upset animal habitat or cause them harm in any kind of way. To do so invites felony conviction from now on. Matter of fact, cutting down trees, littering, harvesting wildflowers, or disturbing natural fisheries constitutes felony conviction and hard prison time. In so doing one has forced his own desires upon the home of

earth's life forms, including his fellow man. It ranks in conviction as burglary to the world's habitat, when one insults the environment."

Eric's jaw dropped. His gaze shifted back down upon the page spread before him.

"That's right Mr. Alister," Ludlum continued. "In ninety days you're expected to hand in all weapons to the Office of Collectivist Extension down by City Hall, or the local OCE, as locals are fond of saying. Weapons are defined as all firearms, automatic, single shot, handguns or long arms, it doesn't matter. All are used for negative purposes, as defined by the UN backed collectivist mandate. It also includes long bows, crossbows, kabar knives, swords you might have in possession, certainly switchblades and flip dirks, even sling shots. To be caught with one of these in your possession in a felony conviction and a ten year prison sentence for seditious activity based on presumption of possibility."

"Possibility for what?," Eric asked in half sarchasm.

"Possibility of committing a violent offense," Ludlum replied. "The people are no longer in charge of local or state government, Mr. Alister, the UN backed collectivists are. They are in control of the state supported schools, what one can and cannot teach, and what your children do while in school and out on the streets. You will raise your children according to what UN mandate commands; or you'll have your door kicked down in the middle of the night, find yourself arrested at gunpoint, then transported into some out of state containment facility. That's right, this is serious business, Eric, and nobody is playing around here."

"They want me to hand over my firearms and weapons, or else they are storming my place in the middle of the night, with guns pointed in my face," Eric snapped. " What kind of hypocrisy is this? What's really going on here?"

“Don’t you get it Eric?,” Ludlum poured out to him in a voice of mounting frustration. “It doesn’t matter in the end here, my friend, the UN backed collectivists are now in total control. From now on their administration will tell everybody everywhere how to live their lives. Resistance is futile, when they control everything everywhere, all over the American nation and the western world at large. Nobody is around offering any form of contest to their commands.”

Eric turned toward the school superintendent, with a mixture of astonishment and anger in his eyes. He made no reply. A moment of silence ensued. Finally Ludlum sighed, then slightly clenched his teeth.

“Don’t forget I know you, Eric Alister,” Ludlum informed him. “ I can sense what you are thinking. Next week all state employees will automatically register with the OCE. Registration has been automated with the state computer system.

“You mean we don’t even have the right to choose?,” Eric asked with a look of frustration on his face.

“Individual choice is now a relic of the past. That went out with sovereignty in state and nation. That’s right Eric, it's all gone with the moan of the old Tennessee 103 freight train we once heard about so much from the elders. You’ll now do as you are commanded, for the greater good, irrespective of your own individual concerns.”

“And you think it's a good thing, right?,” Eric fired.

“Don’t you get it yet, Mr. Alister? It doesn’t matter what I think, or anybody else! Look, do you remember the bitter battles we fought across the state and nation ten years or so ago over religion being mentioned in our schools? Well you know history, Eric. The supreme court shifted its perspective on all basic rights back in nineteen sixty, from individualist over to collectivist.

“ In other words, Eric, America has a sixty year history of collectivist ideology being manifested back down on the ground among the people. In an individualist system people are kings of their own property. They can serve who they want, run business how they feel, and worship how they want, wherever they are. The nation and constitution was founded on such principles, and ran as such for one hundred eighty four years of its history. You try managing your property now from an individualist perspective, Eric. Today, if you look at somebody wrong you can be sued for anything, from discrimination to sexual harassment. Today, the county, state, and nation are taking one more step forward down this trail we’ve all been trending now for sixty years, Eric, that’s all.”

“And where is this trail carrying us all, into some sort of tyranny? I don’t have any use for it myself, thank you,” Eric crassly replied.

“Nobody here said anything about tyranny but you, Mr. Alister!,” Reda Adams suddenly speaks up as she rises from her seat. “We’ll cut through the mud here and see if we can’t make it any clearer to you, sir. You’re going to calm down and sit back down in that chair, then sign this document laying there before you. Can you comprehend the command? There is so much expected of you, since you are in a position of facilitating information back down to our future generations. You are going to command that your teachers give instruction in history from a certain angle in perspective, or you are not going to have a job around here much longer, or anywhere else in the western world, to be honest about this matter. If local management allied with the UN agenda has its way, you and people with your attitude, won't be able to land a job digging post holes in a sewer sludge. You think about that hard fact for a moment here!”

“But the agenda is not based on fact, only collectivist opinion,” Eric fired.

“That doesn’t make a hill of beans difference nowadays,” snapped Reda. You and everybody will do as commanded by the UN mandate, or else. We want to see compliance initiated by the first of next week. Furthermore, you’ll have ninety days to turn in all weapons. An OEC inspector can show up at any time to do a security check anywhere on your property. Noncompliance is an automatic ten year prison sentence. Should you wind up being terminated from your position of employment for refusing to sign this document, a charge of seditious intent shall be assumed. Sedition is a felonious charge as well. Consequently, Mr. Alister, you will be arrested. Do I make myself clear on these matters?” Reda spoke with an inflexible, monotone face.

“When I sign that document, I also am required to reject my own christian religion to be in compliance,” Eric fired in direct reply.

“That's right, Mr. Alister. To be a state employee from this moment forward, one must reject any form of religious conviction, since we earn our salaries addressing a growing multitude of perspectives and personal convictions. No single order of conviction shall have precedence over another one.

“That's a direct violation of my constitutional rights,” Eric fired.

“UN mandate supersedes any nation's constitution from now on, Mr. Alister. You and all of us, have only those rights allotted to us by UN mandate.”

The six foot six, overweight county superintendent, strode over toward the point behind the desk where Eric stood, gazing at the documents placed before him. When Eric glanced up toward him, he almost glowered directly into his eyes, as if to intimidate.

“Look Eric, think of it this way.., everybody else in your position is bearing the same requirements. All you must do is pick these papers up, then sign them, and inside of ninety days,

turn in all of your weapons and ammunition, then all will be well again. You can go back to your nice little cushy job here, managing this school and these kids, telling all these ladies what to do and what not to do. I mean, you'll have it made again as it always was!"

Eric hardened in his expression as he breathed in deeply, clenching his teeth slightly.

"Will it, Ludlum? Will everything be as it was again? Once I sign away all of my bottom line principles and hand over every weapon I own, from bows and arrows, swords, down to knives, will everything really be back to the ways they were? Well, you know what, and I am speaking to every person here in this room right now. I don't think things will be alright again. I think this is only the beginning. Once we have our teeth pulled, they will have us right where they want us, and that is with our backs shoved up against a wall, with a solid rough hand by the throat, and another by the crotch!"

Reda's eyes widened when Eric spoke the last words, while the others glanced around directly into one another's face.

Ludlum firmed suddenly, pressing his lips tightly.

"You'll have until exactly a week from now, same time, same place to make your mind up, Eric. I honestly wasn't expecting such resistance from you. Change is constant. All things must end. We may either face it with open arms and adjust to it, or wither away and die resisting it. In the end these choices are our own and we must live with the consequences of those choices. I know you are a man of principles, but I have faith you'll change your intention when you have time to think for a few days. You know where to find me, Eric, call me anytime and I'll drop back by with the documents."

"Why wouldn't you simply scan the documents over and allow me to sign them electronically,?" Eric asked.

Ludlum inhaled a deep sigh.

“UN mandate demands a physical eyewitness of more authority than he who gives signature.”

“That important, eh? So important for them to one hundred percent verify that we have signed away all of our long valued rights, is it?,” Eric said. “Let's be men about this situation.”

Eric stepped around the corner into his secretaries office with the county superintendent.

“What's really going on here, Ludlum? What's being organized and planned here? You can tell me.”

Ludlum sighed deeply.

“Look Eric, I am under strict orders not to reveal every detail being planned to anyone. I can tell you everything is listed in accordance with the Agenda Twenty One plan, enacted under the sustainable living requirements sections with the planning departments of every municipality nationwide. Much is out there that we all have taken for granted a long time now. The Europeans have long outlawed the use of wood stoves, for example. Here it is twenty twenty three and Powell County still has folks who heat and cook with nothing but wood. People around here build cabins without following any kind of codes, and the list goes on and on. All of this activity must stop. If these people can’t find housing on their own, then the county and the state will do it for them, where they can, underneath their own specifications. The only price they will pay for it shall be in the land they presently own.”

“So the government is scheming to confiscate our lands, you are telling me?,” Eric snapped.

“I never said that, Eric! I mean,” Ludlum sighed deeply in frustration, “I simply don’t know what else to tell you about it. It is real, and it is what it is, and you along with everybody else, are going to have no choice but to face this. This tide is coming, it's rushing in fast and hard, and

everybody all over America is going to ride with it or be washed asunder. All of us make our own choices in the end."

"Yeah, Ludlum, you're right. You and the others have made your choice, and I'm going to make mine."

Both men walked around the corner toward the desk in the main room.

"There is one additional detail I must warn you of, Mr. Alister," said the superintendent in the company of Reda and the others. "By choosing not to sign this document today, you are being relieved of your employment duties for the day without pay. You may resume as usual tomorrow morning. I have given you seven days to think on this matter."

Eric retrieved his light coat and hat from a rack on the wall at the entryway door.

"Yeah, I'll be thinking about it alright."

"You remember what I've told you," fired Ludlum as Eric opened the office door. "This matter is serious business. Noncompliance is a major reference loss. Careers have been destroyed from being assigned underneath such labels. What will you do with your life? Aren't you thirty years old now, Eric? None of us are not getting any younger, Mr. Alister."

Chapter Five

The Decision

The ride home felt as if it would take forever. Everything, the woods, the storefronts, trees, mountains, the people walking, seemed to pass by in a green, black, and gray blur. Traffic jammed seemingly because of a wreck at the main stop-light intersection. Eric needed to turn left so he could head toward home. All he could do was sit, wait, and think. He sighed as he attempted to determine which was worse.

Eric had given his job everything over the course of years. He put his heart, soul, and mind into being the very best anyone could be. The experience he was presently enduring simply wasn't justified. Freedom of individual choice supersedes magisterial demands in America. Forcing compliance to basic life choices was not what this government does, when it's one of the people, for the people, by the people en masse. He knew his history well. Nobody anywhere would ever be able to tell him anything different.

Most of those people originating from farway big cities who were moving to McKinney in such great numbers these days, barely had an American background going back a hundred years. What did they know or even comprehend about an individualist based national constitution? He

could readily tell most moving into his hometown were eastern European by blood, since so many seemed to have Polish last names. For several hundred years the Poles and virtually all others in eastern Europe had, and still have, a collectivist mindset, and only existed by an overwhelming philosophy of blind obedience to a magisterial master. When these people immigrated to America, settling in northeastern and midwestern big cities, they remained inside their own national enclaves. Therefore, these people didn't integrate with broadstream America.

He could readily observe where the reason people in his own section of the nation, including the midwest outside of inner city areas, clashed so hard with these people over the years due to drastically differing life ideologies. One ideology, the collectivist, was developed in eastern Europe, while the other being individualist, developed during America's colonial era. To make matters worse, the two ideologies were irreconcilable and nonnegotiable. In short, it was either one or the other, and collectivism tended to impose itself most affirmatively.

Car horns began to blow as he waited, while his mind continued to drift in reflection. He desperately attempted to install this adoration for history into the minds of the youth inside the school complex he once presided over. He allowed history instructors to take students to historical sites throughout Powell County, and attend any sort of organized historical events.

Once there was a battle reenactment at Liberty Park. This activity emerged over time with McKinney's independence day celebration. An impersonator of Jefferson addressed the gathering crowd, as the record reveals he once did. A Fergusson imitator was there donning clothing from the era, mustering troops for the coming march to King's Mountain. Later on the milling crowd and the soldiers were met by none other than an impersonator of Nathaniel Bedford Forrest, Ebaneezar Powell, and ole DeadEye Jack, himself, giving target practice lessons with his famous Whitmore rifle.

He virtually shut the school down on that day, with only a few instructors and students remaining inside, to accompany students of a similar likeness. His right hand assistant principal, Reginald Rhinehart, from way up in Pennsylvania State somewhere, had no interest in making attendance, so all was set for the field trip. Students and teachers loved the experience, and so did he. Over a course of time students who cared nothing for history or reading in general, came to love the experience because of him planning these types of events.

He also pushed development in mathematics, science, and writing. He didn't ignore the arts. Painting and music were synoptic with excellence in achievement, so these disciplines were elevated as well. Certain trades, such as welding and plumbing were pushed, since so many employment opportunities in these areas existed throughout the surrounding environment. Computer skill development was important, since computers were found with ever increasing instances throughout the system at large. Student proficiency in all of these disciplines drastically increased because of his advocacy. In the end what did this wrought focus on hard life practicalities, and the successes his students and himself achieved, mean to these collectivist idealists? Since the ideology of collectivism sacrifices all individual concerns upon an altar of their view as progress, excellence in achievement obviously meant nothing at all to them.

He gave his signal, turning from the main road into his driveway. His house sat back a ways from the paved road. He pauses his car before the door of his home. He draws a deep breath, falling backward into his seat. The door of his house abruptly opens. His lovely wife steps outside, sauntering down the steps toward the car to greet him. He rolls the window down on the driver's side.

"Eric, I've thought about you all day long at work. I kind of had this inner feeling."

“Please don’t worry about me Breanna, worrying never does any good. Besides that, most of what we worry about never happens anyway.”

“I don’t know, Eric, my intuition never leads me astray.”

Eric signed deeply. He paused before speaking.

“There is some crazy junk going on in the Powell County school system. I don’t know what to make of it exactly.”

“If you are speaking of this political tyranny going on, that’s happening everywhere. I hear trash being spoken of on my job. People are getting angry over a man having a right to wear a dress and makeup. Can you believe that, Eric?”

“It's tough to believe, with all the other stuff really worth worrying about out there. I mean, if a man wants to wear a dress, then why not for him? What is there for me to be angry about?,” Eric replied.

“No, it's not at all that simple. He’s supposed to be able to wear this to work, and wherever.”

“We might have a problem with him wearing inappropriate dress in an environment that demands a certain type of attire. The academic environment, or a labor environment, certainly isn’t a place for this type of male dress choice,” Eric replied.

“No, he has a right, regardless, so claims our management, and even has a right to enter the lady’s restroom,” so his wife expressed.

“To tell you the truth, what I see in all of this political hogwash is a distraction from a failing economy, due to an economic choice taken back in nineteen eighty three, to send our production base offshore and downsize our economic system at large. All the elders informed me that elders during the era who lived through the Great Depression were saying it was destined to fail, and it is failing. These politicians claim automation is taking over the workplace, and people don’t

want to work, and that's causing so many shortages in the supply chain, but it's all a dirty lie. Like the one they are claiming where mankind's industrialization is responsible for the earth's supposed warming and climate change. What then, pray tell, got the earth out of the last ice age if it wasn't global warming? How did mankind have anything to do with it, since it only took ten thousand years for it to get this far.

"Soon they will come out with so many regulations and restrictions on the industrial economy of the western world, telling its citizens its all good for the environment; while offshored corporations relocate to places like China and Pakistan, who use prison slaves, and contract those slaves out for pennys on the dollar to labor in the same factories being expelled from the west. What the western world is then left with are fading middle class employment opportunities, and a diminishing tax base to go with it."

"Now you know why people like Angela Baker down at the Urban Planning board are whispering about plans being drawn up to force relocate citizens from largely rural areas such as Powell County, Tennessee. It's going to be managed slum-living into certain specific urban compounds. That's what everything is coming to, Eric. Life for all in some kind of prison compound.

"Large corporations visualize where they can cultivate a post World War Two style middle class inside the third world, and garnish their own fortunes there, while the western world wastes away inside some sort of massive slum area filled with groveling sub-species and sub-culture degenerates from every angle of perspective. The sheer thought is utterly disgusting, especially when nobody anywhere is standing tall to contest it."

"Not if I can help it and a few others," Eric said as he gazed around. "Somebody must do something."

“I agree,” replied his wife, “but everything is at stake here Eric. Most people have their jobs, albeit, nobody is sure for how long. That is how everybody is being controlled, through their employment. If people are known for disagreeing with the political agenda, then legitimate reasons for their dismissal which would be otherwise overlooked, are promptly discovered. I honestly don’t know what people are going to do, to speak the truth.”

Eric sighed then a moment of silence ensued.

“I reckon we’ll find out soon, Breanna.”

“What do you mean?,” she replied with a tense composure of sudden concern upon her face..

“They placed a document from the UN in front of me today. They even had UN officials in my office area.”

“Did you call the superintendent?,” asked Brianna.

“He was directing this meeting.”

“What was the UN doctrine about?,” asked Brianna.

They are wanting me to advocate this new crock on the historical record, where our national and local heroes are bad, and all of us are wrong. People who call for their own individual liberty are seeking to gratify their own advancement at the expense of everybody else, according to these sons of bitches.

“That’s not true,” his wife suddenly interrupted.

“There’s more,”

“Like what?” asked his wife.

“They demand that I give up my weapons to a UN office somewhere near city hall. They are giving me ninety days to comply, or else they are coming here to arrest me.”

Brianna gasped.

“They are coming here?”

“I only have seven days from now to sign that document. Since I didn’t do it, they sent me home early today. Tomorrow I can return as usual.”

“Are you going to sign?,” Briaana asked, swallowing hard as her blinking eyes brightened.

Eric slowly turned his head in her direction.

“What is in all of this for us, or anybody else other than the few at the top?”

Brianna said nothing, replying rather curtly;

“We have our jobs if we comply.”

“For how long? Are we really supposed to believe them and their grotesque lies?”

“Do we have a choice?,” she asked.

“We have a choice alright, to do it or not to do it,” replied Eric.

Brianna placed her hands upon her hips, glaring directly into his face.

“That is not a choice, Eric. We worked far too long and hard for us to give it all away like that.”

Eric paused, then sighed deeply.

“I’m supposed to sign a statement renouncing my religion, Brianna.”

She signed deeply herself, placing her hands back upon her hips.

“Must I repeat myself, Eric?”

Eric glared hard at her, then turned, stepping away.

The way into the basement was through the living room threshold, around the corner, and down the staircase beneath a pull door covered by a throwdown rug. A string hung from the darkness underneath, as one made their way down the exposed staircase. Eric quickly snapped the uncovered bulb light on, as he entered a musty smelling basement storage area.

Eric reflects upon his Second Amendment, and constitutional rights. He feels the word should be spread about possible dangers in allowing constitutional rights to be usurped. He recently joined the John Birch Society as a traveling agent, seeking to recruit a following. His intent is to spread the correct historical knowledge, and the truth about everything occurring throughout the county and the state at large. At least inside the great state of Tennessee, martial law was outlawed years ago, he smiles, speaking to himself as he gazes around.

On a stand by the wall is a locked firearms cabinet. Inside are two Winchester Model seventy, thirty caliber bolt action rifles. He also has an M1-Garand, maybe the best all round semi-auto rifle ever designed. He also has two twenty two bolt action rifles, and a twenty five caliber rifle. The twenty five caliber rifle was most practical to own when it comes to reloading ammunition, since it's least expensive to do, and will take anything from rabbits to elk. There are two compound crossbows as well. Most importantly, there are tens of thousands in cases of ammunition. As a backup, there are thousands of empty casings, primers, many pounds of lead bar, and at least a hundred pounds of smokeless gun powder.

He has additional storage areas filled with weapons and ammunition rounds stashed inside his mountain hideaway areas. He has large portions of dried food tucked away inside cave, catacomb caverns, hidden campsites, and other places he spent a lifetime venturing into. One weapon in his collection particularly catches his glancing eye. It is a repeating bolt action Remington, in twenty five caliber.

He picks this one up, lifting it from his cabinet, cradling it in his arms like it was his favorite child. It had been many a year since he had felt its kick, yet somehow he always felt attracted to this particular weapon. It was pleasant to the touch, and was extremely accurate, granting him a specially noted power in being able to reach out afar and touch something with emphasis. This

ammunition could down anything worth taking. It could also be downloaded in powder grains, when combined with an upload in the lead, and could shoot quietly as a puff of air while knocking a target down like the punch of a mad gorilla on steroids. Such a weapon proved effective for hunting operations, and would effectively serve other purposes as well.

He raised the wooden gun butt up against his shoulders, gazing down the barrel, then lowered it. The piece felt as comfortable as it always did. He opened the breech, gazing up through the barrel, toward the light. There were no obstructions and still it was sparkling clean after so many long years inside the cabinet. This piece had been in the family since 1936, was mellowed out from hard use, and ready for new action at a moments notice.

There were several five gallon plastic storage buckets scattered around on the basement floor. A number were filled with ammunition. He opened three, and the last one held twenty five caliber ammunition. An aging leather bandolier hung on the wall nearby. He took this down and began filling up the casing holders with the twenty five caliber ammunition. There was much work needing to be done. Tomorrow evening he would venture out into the deep woods, checking on his limestone cave hideaways. He would begin his journey down on the family farm.

Tomorrow evening he would carry in his twenty five caliber, but he would also carry away his M1-Garand. Later on he would pick up at least one twenty two. His Ruger Security nine millimeter would eventually walk with him down in the woods before the week was out. These items were only the beginning to a long term plan for remaining afloat inside a seething, hostile surrounding.

He should have seen it coming long ago. He should have been moving certain selected items out a year or more ago. He knew the worst lay ahead for him. He could feel it in his bones, deep

down inside his body. He vowed with himself he would stand strong and face this imposing monster head on. *Somebody must, and from all appearances, that somebody was destined to be him,* he silently told himself.

When he returned to work the following day, several teachers dropped by his office asking what was going on with him being absent the day before. His replied business duty was callking, so therefore he was out tending to it. Several more walked into the office saying they heard about strange things going on in the county, and if it was true the UN was taking over. His reply was that he hadn't heard, but he would certainly make an announcement to all so concerned when he did. People were catching on that something wasn't right.

Others made very bizarre claims, but Eric knew there was at least a grain of truth in these otherwise outlandish claims. Several informed him that eerie chanting was increasing in its volume from somewhere deep in the wooded hills. People from all over town were telling him of this phenomenon. Mysterious, nearly translucent hooded forms were spotted late at night by the woods edge in many open areas. Children in families of county and city officials reported to him sensations of being watched, as if some form of unseen presence was residing inside their homes. One of these children is named Dale Bates, son of the city manager, Monroe Bates.

Dale claims a package was delivered onto his front door step one evening during the past week. His parents were not home yet, so he picked the package up, opening the front door and carrying the package inside. The package was wrapped in paper for an Easter present. The paper had pictures of multicolored eggs hatching, and bunny rabbits playing. There were flowers, four leafed clovers, and pictures of wiry green grass on it. When he unwrapped the package and opened the box, curiously enough, there was an old wooden wine box inside. He opened this

box, then sat it aside in a corner. All that evening long he felt as if someone was off in the distance somewhere watching. Finally his parents arrived home.

Later that evening Dale and his father, the city manager, steps outside, and two mysterious hooded figures are seen on the far side of the yard. Both shadow-like figures turn away, melting among the trees. While they are outside, his mother sits the table up for dinner. She steps from the dining room into the kitchen. When she returns back into the dinning room, all the plates, glasses, and silverware are sitting on the floor. She heas no sound whatsoever coming from the room.

When nighttime arrived, he and his sister, Alison, settled in for the evening. In the middle of the night Allison awakens screaming. She says she had a dream about an old hag who has made her way into the house through the wine-box, who then attacks and beats them all up; raging that they were taking her land away, and screaming the question of who did they think they were.

Eric found this particular story very interesting, since Chap Monroe, Monroe Bates locally assigned nickname, was in with the collectivists, who were all backed by this UN business he was hearing so much of. When the child told of seeing a very luminous pale face, with pale blue eyes peering inside her bedroom windows late at night, the story seemed to be crossing forbidden lines. He assured the child he would take appropriate action, since he was as much responsible for the student's safety as the parents were, he felt. He picks the phone up, calling the local police department. When the receptionist answers, he informs them of who he is, carefully explaining the growing situation.

"I'm going to connect you with our chief detective, Forrest Griffin, Mr. Alister," says the receptionist. "He is the man who can answer all questions along these lines, and advise you as to how you are going to handle the situation from a principal's perspective."

“Hello,” suddenly says a strong male voice in a slight Powell County accent.

“I’m Eric Alister, principal at East Powell High. I have a very unusual concern I need to report.”

“Sure, that’s what I’m here for,” replied the firm yet very professional sounding voice on the opposite end of the phone line.

“I have a student named Dale Bates, son of Monroe Bates, the city manager. He reports of a strange gift being delivered to his home in the form of a dusty antique wine-box. He reports of his parents seeing unsettling darkly hooded figures near the woodline around their home late at night, who appear to vanish among the bushes and trees.

“There are other tales of whispering voices in the house at night and objects mysteriously being moved around, but what concerns me most of all is the report of a male face peeking inside his bedroom window at night, especially during a partial moon. The face is described as being luminescent, very pale, with pale blue eyes. He tells me of a haunting knock at his door when it's only him at home, only to open the door to find nobody around. My personal concern, as a professional, is that somebody out there could be focusing a nefarious intent directly on him.”

“The family has already reported these incidents, Mr. Alister. I put the concern at the back of my list, since here recently there are many concerns county wide, of shockingly similar situations. My gut feeling is where somehow all of this could be connected to our growing political agitation throughout the county. I don’t know how to explain any of this phenomenon at the present time, but I can tell you, sir, I am very busy these days. When I find out anything definitely, I will call you personally, and leave a note.”

When Eric returns home he begins moving his stored food, his best performing firearms, his ammunition and reloading equipment down inside the mountain catacombs. The distance over

the hill and through the woods behind the lake and his old family farm, was maybe an hour to an hour and one half. Up on Spyglass Mountain was a catacomb entrance veiled behind a large granite boulder. Most average folk would never notice it, even if they were searching.

According to legend, Ebaneezar Powell once used the flat top as a vantage lookout point, since one can view deeply into a thickly wooded ravine between two standing mountains. Any enemy traffic headed his way would be compelled by topography into his direction, or spotted moving along the distant hillside.

There were plenty of shady areas on this summit preventing an observer donning dark clothing from being silhouetted in the sunlight. Some modern day rifle scopes and binoculars could view through this natural veil however, from the furthermost distant hillside if not from the hill summit itself, since the distant mountains above the ravine were significantly taller. To offset this negative possibility, one must take cover inside the summit thicket when viewing, then all advantages would shift in his own direction when he was in possession of the same advanced equipment. The summit beyond could be viewed from an upward angle, making his specific position even more advantageous.

When he stepped inside the cave at the entrance of the first catacomb, he would walk fifty yards into the hillside, making a right turn, rappelling down a fifty foot drop, climbing up twenty feet, then entering a rather small cavern chamber. This chamber was basically only a six by twelve enclosed room. A natural air vent barely large enough for him to crawl through, tunneled its meandering way to a grassy place on the summit veiled by a stony overhang, making a kind of cave all on its own right.

This chamber would be where he would conceal his supplies. From each edge of the entranceway opening, he would construct a stone wall of flat stone, with ends that pass one

another leaving enough space for his body to pass through. Now he was completely concealed when he needed to be.

All week long after work he labors moving his most precious supplies, being a forest green wool hood and cloak, his military surplus clothing, his rifles, his night vision goggles, various scopes and binoculars, and his day-vision rifle scopes, binoculars, folding chairs, tents, mess tins, and other camping gear. He also carefully stashes a supply of favorite informational books, spices, folding cots to sleep on, and more, should he need any of them at a later date in time. High in the mountains dynomite, blasting caps, flashlight batteries, wire, and even rat traps, are coveted items. He was overwhelmingly confident where his supplies would *always* be readily at hand, come what may.

By Friday he decides to venture down into the winding, maze-like catacombs, taking an observational tour. He packs in a military surplus day pack and his coal mine lanturn, then heads out on his way around 0600. When he ventures nine miles down into the catacombs, whispering voices echo inside the cavern. Far ahead in the glow of his lamplight stands a shadowy hooded figure. This figure appears to fade, then materialize again in the dancing light.

A sound of gentle, if not padded footsteps arises from behind. The flickering lamplight on the cavern walls, the faint sounds of distant water dripping and muffled footsteps, the eerie whispers of his name, all together somehow produces a trancelike effect this far down inside the cavern, or was it all due to the sudden inexplicable smell of an incense he fails to recognize? He now feels he is floating, rather than walking. He is entering an immortal realm, he comes to believe. Six cloaked and hooded figures quickly approach him from the front and the rear, seizing hold of his left and right arms, guiding him forward along.

His jaw drops in sheer shock as his body trembles in a rush of utter fear. His heart races as though it would leap from his breast. He swallows hard as he gazes upon these mysterious guiding figures. The figures wear ankle length dark gray or jet black robes, with hoods covering their faces. They breathe heavily. When he glares into their faces, the left halves are painted blue, and the right halves painted red. Around the eye on the right side is a circle painted white. Around the left eye is a circle painted blood red. The hair appears to be long, bleached blond and limewashed, then combed backward on their heads. The most eerie part about these beings is that they feel to him as if they are floating, rather than walking. Two on his right hand side have the faces of a skull. Their hands are gloved, yet feel bony when they seize hold on his arm. He soon loses complete track of where he was being transported for reasons he cannot sufficiently explain..

He comes to his senses again. He is standing inside a mountain summit meadow sheltered by a massive stone overhang. It is pitch black night, with no moon, far as he can tell. His view is still very hazy and dreamlike. He cannot fathom the reason why.

He has no idea how long he was in the catacomb, how far he walked, nor what his present location was. In the center of the meadow stands a circle of man sized stones, with each stone placed maybe nine feet apart. The circle itself might be thirty feet in diameter. In between each standing stone, yet closer in by nine feet, are positioned cedar wood poles nine inches in diameter, the same height as the stones, with carved individual, disturbingly evil appearing faces. The eyes on some of these figures appear to be gaping, while on others the teeth are snarling.

In the exact center of this circle stands a seven feet high, rather elegantly carved cedar column, with a flat top, upon which sits a freshly taken human head. The head seems to be from a young white male in his early twenties.The eyes are gaping wide open, while the jaw appears

to drop. Four hooded figures stand around this column, positioned in each of the four directions. Had the sun arose, Eric feels as if this head would have been in the exact front of the dawning orb when it crossed the mountainous horizon in the distance.

One of these hooded figures wears a highly decorated golden diadem. He hands the other four a quart sized golden chalice. He fills these chalice with thick, blood red liquid. Together the four hoist these chalice upward toward the head.

"Ó rí na gceithre ghaoth, beannaigh ár n-oíche mar atá ár lá agat. Tá an ceann roghnaithe curtha ar fáil againn." {Oh king of the four winds, bless our night as you have our day. We have delivered the chosen one}

All four then consume the thick dark red liquid, then the hooded figure wearing the diadem fills his cup, walking toward Eric as he stands mesmerized behind the four. The figure suddenly seizes him violently by his left arm, pulling him to stand before the column upon which the severed head sits. This figure harshly demands that he consume the liquid, then gaze upward toward the bloody severed male head. Eric hesitates, then reluctantly does as he is commanded. He gazes at the severed head sitting atop this elegant cedarwood column. The hazy scene almost fades in and out.

"Ó hallowed one, an nglacann tú leis an mortal seo mar do messiah anointed dár ndaonra oidhreachta?," speaks the priest wearing the golden diadem. {Oh hallowed one, do you accept this mortal as the anointed messiah of our heritage promised land?}

The head's eyes commence blinking. The tongue reaches out and licks its lips. The gaping mouth closes, then opens. It almost appears to swallow.

"Sea, tá a chuid fola íon, is iad a aithreacha iad siúd atá againne, agus mé féin, Hambele ', a dheonaigh an chonair chothaithe chéanna dá shinsir uair amháin le haghaidh Infinity."

{Yes, his blood is pure. His fathers are those of ours; and myself, Hambele, god of infinity and the four winds, once granted his ancestors the same cherished tract for all time to come.}

An icy chill courses through Eric's entire body. He fails to fully comprehend what is being said, but this talking head is far more than his poor mind can contain. Somehow he knew the words it was speaking involved him. As he slowly faints from loss of consciousness, he hears more words from the severed head spoken aloud.

"Ye ridire mighty, turas ar aghaidh i measc an namhaid le mo bheannacht. Gach todhchaí le haghaidh ár dtír dhúchais agus patrimony luíonn laistigh tú, OH ceann iontach! I luíonn tú gach dóchas, gach aisling, lest tá an patrimony imithe i gcónaí ar aghaidh. Behold ye caomhnóirí ársa, is é an apocalypse fada prophesied uafásach anois!"

{Ye mighty knight, ride forward among the enemy with my blessing. All future for our homeland and patrimony rests within you, oh great one! In you lies every hope, every dream, lest the patrimony is gone for all time forward. Behold, the long prophesied terrible apocalypse is now!}

He awakes laying upon the catacomb floor where he first glimpsed the hooded figures. He has enough for one day's outing, although somehow he feels as if he lost track of time somewhere along the way.. He arises from the cold stone floor, turning, going in the opposite direction from the space where the hooded figure first stood. It would be a long walk back home. He feels terribly hungover and his experiences left him feeling more as if they were some type of horrendous nightmare. What exactly was he to make of it all? What on earth happened to him? How would he explain all of these unbelievable horrific scenes? People would call him crazy, and he would be out of a job dealing with the public for sure.

He picks up his pace. After four and a half hours walking time, he exits out of the catacomb entrance on Spyglass Mountain. It was full daylight and the sun felt very pleasant shining down upon him. Maybe he would simply forget about what had happened to him, but the unsettling vision couldn't be shaken completely from his mind. After walking through the woods an hour and a half more, he makes it back to his home by the lake. Nobody was home, maybe they were uptown shopping or something, since it was the weekend he said to himself.

He gets into his own car, motoring uptown to old man Lazarus Bryant's hardware store. The woodstove is still going in the rear of the old general store and hardware supply. The elders are sitting in a circle around it, smiling and speaking in low tones.

"Well hello, Mr. Alister," said a somewhat quiet voiced man dressed in a suit and tie, wearing a nice white stetson fedora.

"Hello, to you, Mr. Sutton," replies Eric.

"We got some news to speak about now."

"Oh yeah, Mr. Sutton, what kind of news?"

"You haven't heard? Things are about to heat up around here for sure now, boy."

"Well what happened?," asks Eric.

"You know we've had these protesters around in these parts now, like many other places in this country these days, right?"

"I wasn't sure they were around here, but I know what you are speaking of, Mr. Sutton."

Sutton leans over toward him and begins speaking in low tones.

"Well you've heard of that crazy professor from over at the university. I think his name is Mathias Mordred. You know he's been on TV, the newspaper, and everywhere else, a-preaching communism, and how everybody around here is bad. He's the one who got these out-of-town

young folk all worked up, a-whining and complaining about our history, and the way everything around the county is."

"I heard about him," Eric smiles as he replies.

"Well the professor mainly stayed inside the school, but he had a right-hand assistant who was out on the streets around here last week. I can't recollect his name."

"Oh yeah?," Eric says, "I haven't heard."

"Well, somebody found him dead over yonder on Hargrove Street, behind Spanky's Barbecue, up in the woods like, early this morning," Sutton informes.

"That's horrible, Eric replied. "How old was he?"

"Maybe twenty three," Sutton replies, "but there's more."

Eric eases up in his chair as Sutton begins speaking.

"Some damn body cut the poor sap's head off, and didn't leave any tracks, or sign, or anything. Nobody don't know what to make of it. Not even ole Forrest Griffin, said to be the Sherlock Holms of Tennessee. Nobody ever did find that damn head. It's like, whoever did it was keeping trophies or something."

Eric's blood turns ice cold inside his head and chest, collapsing directly into his lap. He swallows hard, soon regaining his composure.

"Well, they'll find whoever did such a thing, Mr. Sutton. You know they will."

Sutton leans in closer toward Eric, speaking in a muffled voice.

"Son, this is Powell County, and we've had strange things going on here for many long years. I don't know if they will or not. I can tell you this much, though. People in these parts don't cotton to communists, animal and tree huggers, and women that lay up with their dogs, thinking of them like they were people and such, and thinking everybody else should be made to do the same. I

can tell you that much. That's the kind of sick garbage these people are pushing, and you know as well as myself, it just ain't gonna flush around here in this county, boy!"

"I hadn't heard about the dog thing, Mr. Sutton."

"Yeah, there's a woman in town right now that keeps a big German police dog with her in the house, the car, and everywhere she goes. She eats after him, washes with him, and everything, so the word around here is claiming from women who know what they're talking about. She claims she's from California or somewhere, and nobody anywhere ever sees her with a man. That dog must be her man, so everybody is talking around here."

Eric chuckles.

"That might be going a bit too far now, Mr. Sutton."

"These out-a-state furreners from New york and places like that, have some wanked-up ideas about everything. I can tell anybody that much."

Eric sits around the pot-belly stove a bit longer conversing, then decides he might need to ride back home after Sutton told him that final story. He was probably only trying to be amusing in his own way. Eric wasn't the type to hold any of it against him.

He pulls up before his front door. His wife was there ready to greet him.

"Where have you been, Eric? I was worried."

"I went hiking. I've always loved going down in the catacombs. Was I gone that long, darling?"

"You've been gone since yesterday. You stayed down overnight."

"I was aware time had transpired, but not that much," Eric replies.

"Some messed up things have been going on in town and throughout the county, Eric. I don't think being in the woods or down inside those caves and catacombs is a wise idea right now."

“What do ya mean, Breanna?”

Eric walked through the kitchen, picking up a leg of fried chicken his wife prepared, sitting inside a straw plate on the stove top.

“Well, the protests have started up here in Powell County, and you know with all of this political antagonism hanging so thickly in the air, people are on edge around in these parts.”

“Yeah, I could see why. I myself may not even have a job here before long, because of it.”

“ People have been seeing the Rianna around here lately, more so than usual. County leaders are reporting dark hooded shadows moving across their yards in the moonlight.”

“Oh yeah, well that’s interesting.”

But there is more, Eric. They’ve found one of the organizers dead the other night because of it. Now a new line in all of this monkey business around here has been crossed.”

“You know Powell County, Brianna. It was bound to come into this, no doubt, so it doesn’t surprise me.”

“It was a terrible crime, Eric. Somebody cut that boy's head off, then carried it away somewhere.”

“It's been known to have happened before around here. I can’t say such a thing has happened in my lifetime, however, I might add,”replies Eric.

“It has been a bizarre case, thus far. There are no tracks, no blood, other than the slash where the head was removed. Nobody anywhere saw or heard anything. Some people are claiming it was done by hillside ghosts long said to frequent the area, and it does seem like the handiwork of a ghost.”

“I can see why they would be saying such a thing. Maybe it was. Elders have long spoken of such things around here interfering in the lives of people.”

“But what is strange is how almost all of these sightings were by people from way outside of the county. That boy’s family is from way off somewhere. I think California. His father is a rather famous college professor over at the university.”

“Wasn’t he the one prosyletising the advantages of communism over capitalism to the students?,” Eric asks his wife.

“He had his own cable channel dedicated to the effort.”

“I know,” Eric replies. “Wasn’t his son who was murdered, recruiting protesters backing this conviction?”

Eric sighs deeply.

“All I have to say is, well? These people should research the area they’ve relocated into. If they don’t like the way we do things around here, then go back home. Don’t try to force something down everybody else’s throats.”

“My concern, Eric, is that it's dangerous out there for anybody. Something going on is messed up.”

The following morning arrives. Eric and his family motor downtown to the Baptist Church in the heart of town. It feels relaxing to simply ease back and examine the six huge Doric columns, with the front double doors positioned in the center. Several people he knew were walking toward the doors, so he and his family exited the car and commenced walking. The doors appear to open by themselves as his family nears.

Inside is a large sanctuary, appearing the same as it always had. At the fore stands the preacher’s podium, and the quire loft behind him. The people soon begin filling up the sanctuary. The preacher, donning a sable robe, stands before the podium, and the people become still and quiet.

“Good morning, my fellow congregation, it's so good to be here again. It's important that we remember those who can’t be with us on this sunny morning.”

There is a drawn out pause of silence. Every head bowed.

“These certainly are trying times we live in, sickness abounds. Let us pause a moment more and pray for those who are sick and shut in this morning.”

There is another drawn out pause of silence.

“If it's not sickness, then it's those who are engaged in the devil’s work. If he is not performing the devil’s deeds, then he’s preaching Satan’s gospel. Prayer solves problems, ladies and gentleman, not violence. There exists a powerful temptation to lash out at Satan’s messengers, but when we give in to those temptations, then we are doing Satan’s work. There is no excuse for it! As children of God we simply can’t allow ourselves to be dragged in. The guilty are guilty, but the innocent are pure, so says the word of God.

“We all have bad things happen, dear ladies and gentlemen, and this secular life never has been fair. What we are compelled to do when misfortune strikes is search out the weaknesses in the system, and they are always present. Turn the situation around from our disadvantage toward our advantage.

“I knew a young man who was fired from his job once, to make room for a supervisor's family member. Problem was, a bunch of false negative stuff was placed into his work folder, and he had no affordable way to contest it. He didn’t get angry when he was locked out of everything in Powell County here. He had friends who would back him as references, so he simply motored on into the county next door, found him a good job, and carried on as if nothing ever happened. Now he has better pay, lives in a better house, found an attractive girl, married, and has an all round better life. That is what I call having a winning attitude, and as children of God we are

winners, ladies and gentlemen. Never should we allow anybody anywhere to ever tell us different things!”

Sunday evening is a relaxing experience. Monday comes around way too quickly. Soon he was parked before the front door at the school building. He arrives early, and several long black cadillac type cars are parked near the door. An owl hooting in a large oak tree nearby, and a tightening, sinking feeling inside the pit of his stomach, indicates some misfortune might lay in store for him. *He would try to think positive*, he tells himself in silence, as he opens his car door, standing on the hard surface of the parking lot.

When he approaches the front door a security guard on duty opens it. He nods hello, but the phenomenon of having a security guard at the front door was new. When he passes through the door of his office, the same blond headed Canadian lady named Westmorland, greets him as he crosses the threshold, smiling a bright toothed, plastic grin.

“Good morning Mr. Alister, it's so nice to see you here on this fine Monday morning.”

“It’s good to be here again,” he replies as he walks past her toward his desk in the office area.

When he rounds the corner the superintendent, Ludlum, the other officials, and the security personnel are surrounding the desk there to greet him. He glances over toward his right, and Mike Wiseman with his camera, stands filming him as he walks over to shake everybody’s hand. Ludlum eases backward into the leatherbound swivel chair with his arms folded, smiling broadly.

“Well Eric, I’m glad to see you here again. Since you’ve already met everybody here, I guess we need to get right into our business for the day, agreed?”

Eric makes no reply, but only stands silent, awaiting a response and a continuation. Ludlum glances over toward Reta Adams and the others in the room. The red haired Reta, only holds to her hard inflexible composure.

“This document spread here on this desk needs no introduction,” Ludlum announces. “ The moment is here, and now, Eric, and the decision is all yours. I don’t think you need another brief of the consequences for noncompliance.”

“If there are consequences for refusing my signature, then where lies my freedom of choice?,” Eric fires.

“Don’t make this hard on yourself, Eric,” Ludlum firmly speaks with a faint air of antagonism in his voice. “There is a movement at this very moment, all over this country, pushing for the same end. This school is a dispensary for transformational knowledge in our youth, the next generation. What is being asked of you is the same as what is being asked of every teacher on every level here in America at this very moment.

“This is the new American future, Eric, and the future shall-overcome, when we of today hold our eyes on the prize. Do these words of eternal renown ring a bell to you, Eric, a student and master of American history? Are you, a praised leader in this community, determined to be part of the solution, or destined to be a backwards thorn in the new enlightened society’s side?”

Eric makes no reply, he only stands firmly in one place, glancing into the stern faces of others in the room.

“Every person inside this room has already signed this document with no hesitation. I understand, you’re different. You are somewhat of a nonconformist, it's in your blood. It's part of the area’s fabric and history, for crying out loud here! I tell you what, Eric. I’ll give you three more days off to think about it. Is that fair enough?”

“No!,” Eric suddenly snaps, “none of this is fair, to speak from my perspective on the matter.”

“What do you mean, Eric, when you say *no* like this?,” Ludlum gasps with a haughty half-smile.

Eric firmly glared the superintendent directly into his eyes.

“In the name of God Almighty, my heritage, demographic and patrimony, and all that I believe in and forever hold dear to, I adamantly refuse to sign Satan’s one world government document on that desk there.”

“What!,” Ludlum suddenly explodes into laughter, “You’re refusing to sign? I understand, you’re frustrated and angry, no problem. Take three and come back, same bat time, same bat channel!,” Ludlum brazenly announces as he continues roaring with laughter.

“I told you no, and you can keep your job, if it is hinged on me signing that document.

Ludlum abruptly firms up.

“Fine!,” Ludlum suddenly thunders as Eric turns to walk back through the door. “When I turn your name in for noncompliance, a presumed charge of seditious potential will be automatically filed by the UN computerized program. Once this file has been stamped and notarized by all concerned departments, and copies filed, an application for an arrest warrant will be automated by the system. In two days at most it will come through, and the sheriff accompanied by a posse will be summoned out to bring you in. You’ll never work again anywhere in America! Once the news media gets wind of this, you won't be able to land employment digging shit holes in a turd factory!,” Ludlum roars as Eric strides through the office door, then walks down the hallway.

Chapter 6

The KFR

For many years Powell Central publicly prided itself on being a model of enlightened intellectualism. Its haughty administration building was a scaled down nearly two hundred year old model of the Parthenon acropolis on the hill in Athens, Greece, once a knowledge repository for the entire Western World. The campus arrangement was modeled on an artist's vision of what the Garden of Eden must have appeared to the eye, back during mankind's great Golden Age of excellence. In its center stands a massive live oak tree with large glass vials filled by rolled copies of the world's greatest literature and philosophical works, hanging encompassed in attractive life-like fake leaves as if they grew there naturally. Long standing campus tradition knows this as *The Tree of Knowledge*. In the rear of that building, philosophy and education classes are held.

One cool morning that spring, a rather narrow, neatly wrapped package roughly the size of a plump cigar box appeared at the front door of that building, with Mathias Mordred's name clearly written on the front in a rather large Blackwood Castle font. This materialization was

interesting because Dr. Mordred publicly announced on the university cable channel, that any collectivist protester wishing for him to personally endorse his ideological or theological convictions in writing, deliver him a doctrinal manuscript or a published work. A hardline ideological MA student colleague of his named Doyal Holzeman, accompanied him as he picked up the package for examination. Both made their way back into Dr. Mordred's personal office area.

Dr. Mordred hailed from Chicago, Illinois. Back in the nineteen thirties his parents emigrated to the United States from Warsaw, Poland. He has worked as a primary instructor of philosophy and a lesser instructor of education for the past nine years at Powell Central University.

According to him, his grandparents were first hand witnesses to the flagrant corruption of capitalism, with the rise of the Warsaw Ghetto and the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp system; since the facility was owned and operated by I.G. Farben, the largest chemical plant on earth back in its day. Since capitalism always reverts back to slavery, with employers continually seeking to maximize profit margins and dealing with competition against forces of pricing, quality, supply and demand, another more humanist system must be established, so he instructs his class and those around him; that not only grants due consideration for universal humanity, but the natural secular planitary environment surrounding him. For this reason he has been engaged on a personal mission, reaching backward to his high school days in Chicago..

He began with his own classroom, where students are instructed that inside the environment of his specific classroom, all stand on equal ground. There are no distinctions of wealth, class, or achievement. Grades and work assignments are given in common, utilizing a variety of cooperative education techniques. When he teaches philosophy he instructs from the standpoint of ancient philosophers who affirmatively believed in the commonality of man. When he

instructs in any historical discipline, especially local history, he instructs from a point of identifying anti-humanist shortcomings in national and local heroes, and the prevailing system at large down through the years. The classroom always ends on a positive note, with his particular vision of a glittering collectivist future presented in a nonverbalisesd conclusion of being a new Golden Age for universal mankind.

Dr. Mordred is known by and loved by many admirers throughout Tennessee state and nation. Recently in the New Age Humanist, the school newspaper paper he helped found, he announced he was running for University Chancellor. He sarcastically stated while on air where he often fantasized about running for United States President. He receives cards and gifts through the mail on a routine basis.

Doyal Holzeman and Dr. Mordred take a seat around Mordred's personal desk. Several fellow student protesters rush in to conversate and interact. Doyal and two more persons examine the package, which seems slightly heavy for a box feeling like it should be filled with cigars . Dr. Mordred smiles broadly, saying;

"Enough talk about it and pondering what we have at hand here, let us all now have a look!"

He rips the colorful paper off, and the revelation is a thick book with the title, *Knights of the Freeborn Republic, A sacred blood creed.* The cover appears to be constructed from new vellum with cloth squares on its surface, in which the centers are filled with rubies and sapphires.

"What on earth is this? Has anybody heard of the KFR? Who on earth are they, for gracious sake?," asked Dr. Mordred, smiling from a mouth veiled by a thick auburn, chest length beard.

He opens the cover on what was now clearly a hollowed out book, revealing a mechanical device that suddenly explodes loudly before he could react. He and one of the three students collapse in pools of blood onto the floor of the office. The other students and the professor in

training, Doyal Holzman, are injured, being thrown back solidly against the wall. Two of the students are seriously injured, with broken arms and shot shrapnel dotting their face. One student has his jaw broken.

There is a stir throughout the entire university campus area. Colleagues, students, and campus visitors rush to the rear quarters of the administration building. Within minutes police and the rescue team are on hand, rushing through the swelling murmuring crowd. The campus news and the local news crews are on the scene as the two dead bodies are hastily covered with white sheets, placed upon a travoise, and loaded onto an awaiting medical vehicle. The seriously injured are loaded onto a transport cart, and into an ambulance vehicle; while the police interview Doyal and the other two students, taking notes and writing their reports until another medical transport vehicle arrives later on.

“Who are you, Mr. Holzman?,” the policeman asks.

“I am an MA student training for a doctorate in philosophy. I am also Dr. Modred’s personal assistant and ideological colleague.”

The policeman scribbles hurriedly.

“Are you an accomplice in any type of on or off campus political activism?”

“I help organize the protest movement going on as we speak, sir,” he said

“Do you have any fellow accomplices on your own level?,” the policeman asks.

“Yes I do. His name is Tyson Walsky. He works as a reporter for the local news media.”

“Did you see this package?,” asks the policeman.

“Yes, it was about the size of a five hundred page book. It appeared to have been constructed from vellum, with one inch cloth squares on its front cover, like some type of middle aged holy

book. On the front was the title; *Knights of the Freeborn Republic*. The subtitle was; *A sacred blood creed."*

"Have you or anybody around here ever heard of this organization called Knights of the Freeborn Republic?"

Doyal chuckled.

"I can't speak for anybody else here, but I sure haven't. I doubt anybody else has. These locals who have been here forever, speak of many strange organizations and occurrences."

"Did you catch a glimpse of the exploding device inside this book?," asked the policeman.

"Dr. Mordred opened the book at nearly a seventy degree angle, I suppose," replied Holzemen. "For an instant what I think I saw was a strapped down pipe nipple, a battery, and a rattrap. A small wooden wedge must have separated a positive and negative wire wrap on a powder filled pipe nipple. A piece of monofilament fishing line was attached to the cover, I suppose. By the time I realized what I was seeing, it was already too late. More than likely everybody else was in the same boat with this thing.``

Doyal Holzemen is a lifetime political activist. He is a huge believer in leaving outdated convictions deep in the past, to fully embrace new conceptualism. As a youth he was a puny, uncoordinated, quasi-feminine figure, stumbling his way around campus attempting to fit in somewhere. When in third grade his mother often went away from home for two or three nights at a time, maybe in town, maybe far away. She was said by locals to be laying up with various men, sometimes only half her own age.

Consequently, Doyal was forced to care for himself as were his two older brothers, including being able to wash his own clothes. Often his clothing was not washed, left damp with sweat or remaining water from the washer, thereby souring in the process. This souring of his clothing

caused him to often carry the same odor as fresh piss, leaving him open for harassment by his fellow classmates. From the time he relocated into McKinney during the third grade on, he was a subject of constant derision by his fellow classmates.

Holzemen's mother was publicly called *Moll McKinney*, in a name of subtle derision and reference to his mother's free-wheeling lifestyle, as she is compared to the classic novel, Moll Flanders. His father was known as a woodshed drunkard and drug addict, a picker, trader, and town junk dealer, virtually living inside the tool shack behind the nineteen sixties era mobile home on the backside of a field in a mountain dale, where Doyal was raised.

The lady owning the garage beauty parlor nearby also owned the local video store in town, claiming Doyal's father appeared at her doorstep around midnight seeking to illegally rent pornographic films. Her husband threatened to kill the man with his Colt forty five for daring to come around at such hours of the night asking for material like this from his wife, until he noticed her charging three times the normal rent for the unchaste disturbance. Oddly, Doyal's father paid whatever amount was requested for the material, without question. This way, should he fail to return the video or disk, she received payment and still turned a profit. She however, claimed pornograophy was her most sought after rental material. Advent of the internet eventually put her out of business, unfortunately.

Her husband hated Doyal's father for his uncouth, suspiciously perverted, child molester look, declaring underneath his breath that *if the sick bastard batted an eye he was going to blow his brains out.* The obvious fact was already out among neighbors that Doyal's father didn't pay his ready, willing, and able wife any carnal attention.

Later in time a boy named Jim Sledge and his sister Randi, claimed Doyal walked up to a younger male child on the school bus when in the fifth grade, shoving his right hand down the

boy's pants, while appearing to move his fingers gleefully about underneath the denim cloth, wearing a sick smile reminiscent of his father's as he did so. His publicized nickname from that point on was Eromenous, when his harassers tried to be nice about it. He hated and detested this even more than when they came out in the open and called him *Homo*.

This harassment from fellow students continuing all the way through his school years, was beyond the point of toleration, seriously affecting him mentally for life. Not only did he hate school, often he found himself hating his fellow man, especially all traditionalists. These elements constituted a majority of those harassing him throughout his youth, since all of them hunted, went to church, and were highly proud of having ancestors who battled in the Revolution and the US Civil War.

Doyal was a B student when he was in school. After attending school at West Powell High, he attended university at Powell Central University. Holzemen joined a group on campus pushing Marxist ideology, who are hard-line united with a nationally known movement known as the Anti-Fafe (anti-Fascist forever), who are uncompromising advocates of Marxism, being anti-capitolist, anti-traditionalist, and anti-individualism more than anything else. This group also advocates collective ownership of all land, and the general illegalization of individual enterprise in any form.

Because of his experience as youth in an individualist society, he detests any representation thereof. This hatred is often directed toward the American flag, but especially any suggestion of the old Southern Confederacy; be it statues, battle reenactors, or individuals expressing heritage connections. He hated individuals who owned businesses, but he also despised anybody generating casual profits.

According to Holzemen, citizens should labor for the state system as a national duty obligation, with the state system receiving payments generated. The state system consists of the population, and the general population has a right to benefit at the expense of the laboring individual, since in such a system material ownership is ardently discouraged.

Doyal recently became an uncompromising activist for LGBD rights, pushing for the establishment of draconian laws forbidding descrimination against or derision of, in any form. Persons claimed as being guilty of committing such offenses underneath the belief system of Doyal's Anti-FaFe congregation, were condemned as being guilty underneath a prevailing assumption of no such claims being made, if guilt on some level was never reality.

Since the anti-FaFe crowd believed in communal living and were hard-core atheists, they didn't believe in marriage or any form of holy sanctimony, and women in the group were often shared. At times a woman would choose to settle down with a man or another woman, but most of the time these young female idealists preferred living like fighting cats in heat, and on the prowl. For a spell one of these women formed an intimate attraction to Holzeman.

Her name was Suzanna Carpenter, originally from Modesto, California. Her communal name was *Mika*, who achieved the coveted rank among females of being called a *Fairy Godmother*. A Good Witch or Fairy Godmother, was allowed to dwell in the chief den with the Grand Master, and have access to the best luxuries and the organization's first choices. She was not required to remain attached to the Grand Master, however. She could entertain and obligate herself to other men of her selected choice. At times she might consort with three men at the same time, there in the Grand Master's den or sleeping chamber, before his very face, and there was nothing himself or anybody else could do about it. Mika chose to remain loyal to Doyal for a spell, however.

Once Mika learned of her pregnancy, she and Doyal assumed an oath of dedicated loyalty to one another and the newly developing babe. They both stood beneath a full moon during the April equinox, pledging vows received and orchestrated by the chief Grand Master in the organization. A ring of smooth jade was placed upon her left third finger, since this finger is where the heart line lies, and jade symbolizes human commonality and the imperfection of humanity. There was a wine salute from the spectators to the moon, and the visualized human face found in the moon. There was no mention of divine blessing nor any presence of sacred divinity. This union was totally secular in nature.

The organization pitched in, securing this couple access to a small bungalow perched on the edge of town not far from the university. Once the child was born, after its third year it would be taken in by the organization and raised in accordance with organizational belief systems. This home, however, would be the child's primary residence. The child was named Avinay Holzemen.

Three years before the bombing incident, silent hooded shadow figures were seen moving through the yard in the low dim glow of the moon light. A feeling prevailed inside the home itself of this couple and the child being watched. When Avinay was four years old, he told of an old man donning a finely starched and ironed suit, tie, and fedora style hat, named Mr. Goreman, who came out to play with him. Mr. Goreman would push him in a swing, He would take him walking. He would play games with him, such as hide and seek. When Doyal and Mika were informed by the child of this man, they were very disturbed to say the least. Doyal purchased a pistol even though he was very outspoken against the Second Amendment, walking around the house and his general neighborhood, seeing nobody nor finding anything out of the ordinary.

Often when this couple and their child went out for dinner or away on vacation, when they entered the bungalow things sitting on the dining table would be discovered sitting on the floor,

or furniture moved around, as if somebody was in the home itself. Night Time was most disturbing. Mika and Avinay often saw disturbing luminescent hooded pale faces in their windows, or heard heavy knocking on their walls. Avinay heard his name whispered in the stillness of the night. One night Mika and Avinay heard an owl hoot and a Whippoorwill chirp his call. The owl suddenly spoke Avinay's name, followed by the Whippoorwill's call. The general sensation was nerve racking, to say the least.

Now Avinay was twelve, and Doyal was thirty five. Since Doyal was so public in his political activities, he knew the ire of heritage locals was against him. He was also a close ally and associate of Dr. Mordred, who was very public with his political views and opinions. The bombing murder sent a complete shock through his entire organization and movement at large. At times he also felt his organization was coming apart, since many within his own group criticized his seemingly traditionalizing lifestyle. Often this criticism transformed into argumentation, and the emotions were heated. The society granting him and his feline, as they noted her, enduring cost-free accommodation was a primary source for the arguments. Might these experiences be due to his harassment by heritage locals, or those from within his own ranks?

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Mckinney and all of Powell County was becoming a difficult place for law enforcement to operate. There was so much happening at the same time, and nobody in any single place could hope to keep up with the developments. Forrest Griffin was up to the task. He didn't bear the reputation of being the Sherlock Holmes of Tennessee for nothing. If he couldn't track these

guilty culprits down, then nobody anywhere else in America could. Such convictions were even more true in Appalachian hill country. No other area in America was similar in nature, terrain, and people.

All of this began with these collectivist protesters descending upon Powell County from California, Oregon, and New York state primarily. Many were attracted because they already had families living in Powell County. The heritage traditions here were among those of renown, and known far and wide outside of the territory.

In the beginning the primary focus of these protesters was on Liberty Park, and the old Market House. Numerous collectivist groups directed their resentment toward the statues in the park, chanting that the city of McKinney should pull them down, replacing them with more liberal iconic representations, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. Any representation of Athena, or revered God of Greek antiquity, was an embrace of western heritage, and a recognition of its superiority over what remains of planet earth, while indirectly suggesting its right to dominate, according to the logic of these protesters. Many of these statues were spray painted in fluorescent red, being totally covered with condemning obscenities and flagrant character defamations.

The Market House was condemned as a center for being a slave auction block. Truth is few were actually sold there, since slaves were expensive and too many residents simply didn’t possess funds for purchase. In complete disrespect for the icon's revered position among heritage locals, these protesters spray painted obscenities and profane words all over the structure, demanding that the county and city manager destroy it. A potential for head on trouble didn’t pick up pace, until the statue of ole Dead Eye was actually pulled down and destroyed. Wood

stove talk at the hardware stores claimed the ghost of Ebaneezer Powell would seek revenge for his disrespect.

Virtually all of these protesters originated from various places far outside the county and state. There was no question that the ire of the heritage locals was aroused, feeling an offensive attack directed toward themselves was intentionally misplaced upon heritage icons of every type . The university also harbored these protesters and organized them. There may be no question of being justified to suspect local activity, when the beheaded corpse was discovered behind the barbeque restaurant. Now this package bomb was giving more credibility to the suspicion of a local response, bearing an intent to repel the wicked foreign invaders.

There were more strange events being reported following the beheading. These sightings of bizarre figures witnessed in the yards of county and city officials, coupled with what were apparently unsettling home intrusions and disturbances. The fact of these occurrences leaving absolutely no tangible clues complicated the matter even more. If these suspects were locals, then who might they be?

On a daily basis he paused inside the hardware stores, walking in toward the backside of these places, where the grizzled elders gather around the woodstoves. He has yet to find one who has heard of the KFR, or Knights of the Freeborn Republic. One elderly gent did appear to want to speak, while yet appearing strangely hesitant. All he would say is that numerous cults were active, dwelling deep in the mountain wilderness, where these covert underground societies resided in total liberty for more than two hundred years. No people anywhere were around volunteering to tell him where he might begin searching.

One group of protesters were raised in the area. Seven stated they knew where to begin. Various heritage locals were close friends and associates. They would investigate one weekend to confirm their suspicions. One Friday night around midnight they decided to make their move.

The group walked through the woods toward an area known as Devil's Head hill. This is a small mountain with a natural stone in the shape of a devil's head. As they walked toward the hill, inside a veiled distance they could hear group chanting. Suddenly exactly at midnight, they saw a brilliant light beaming in their direction. The light begins to sway, as if somehow it knew of their presence. Suddenly the light moves in their direction.

The group turns, fleeing for their lives in the opposite direction. The light seems more brilliant than the sun, completely overwhelming every individual. Suddenly one group member awoke from beside a narrow dirt road near the area where they had entered inside the thick and wide wood stand. He was alone, and there was no sign of the others.

Forrest walked back to the area during daylight hours with the young man. The young man appeared totally confused, failing to locate the position where the group stood when the light shone from the direction of the hill, then moved upon them. Supposedly there was a cave complex in the hill, but when he and the young man searched, they both failed to locate it.

Now police with blood hounds were combing the woods searching, yet failing to pick up even a scent. Drones and low flying, slow moving airplanes were searching the hill and the surrounding area, using thermal imaging devices. Nobody anywhere was coming up with anything.

There was some faint hope, however. A hermit dwelling inside a clapboard shack in the area, also gazes into a bowl with a dark inside, and a blotter of dark ink dropped on the water surface.

He claims he can see into the future and backwards into the past. Police have been known to use his services with success, although they would never admit to it publicly.

A few years prior, a man who consorted with numerous local men's wives, was told to cease his dalliances, or else. He continued on in disregard. A month later after he failed to come back home to his own wife, his half decayed corpse was discovered tied to an apple tree, and castrated, where he died from blood loss. When no suspect could be nailed down, this hermit led police to the home of the guilty culprit, who eventually admitted to his crime.

This hermit has witnessed a vision in regard to the present case. He claims it was a subterranean cult who captured the young protesters. He claims the protesters were blinded, and a powerful drug called tigamy-tigamy was blown into their faces. This drug causes its victims to blindly and unquestionably follow their leader wherever he desires for them to go. They will do virtually anything he asks them, while retaining no knowledge of the fact afterwards. He claims scent removal spray was put on the souls of their shoes.

According to him, every member of this group will be transformed into a zombie slave, the females used for sex, and prostituted out to other cults in exchange for various practical every day items none of them can venture into town and pickup for themselves. This drug will keep them held as prisoners for the remainder of their lives. At this very moment one of his assistants was doing a followup with this hermit, who claimed he knew where the cult's covert subterranean entryway was.

The hermit failed to identify the cult's title. He claimed their beliefs were that Powell County was the holy promised land granted to its heritage people. They strongly believed the only way to save their heritage and its divinely allotted land was by use of deadly force, fire, and various forms of guerilla warfare. For them, their only freedom was the dense hillside wilderness.

Himself, his assistant, and this hermit combed the woods searching in vain for a sign and this mysterious entryway. As of yet not one single lead existed in regard to any of these crimes, but he was determined not to give up nor give in to defeat.

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Avinay Holzemen is an exceptionally intelligent student. His parents knew their dear child was gifted from the time he was four years old. During that time he began playing the piano by ear, even though he was never given a lesson nor did he know how to read music. For that reason his parents had him pass up a grade, placing him inside the prestigious advanced studies session at Schliemann's Science and Music Academy on the eastern side of McKinney.

Often Avinay runs for class president and always wins by a landslide. Students are naturally attracted to him, following his lead. He fantasizes about getting into politics one future day, and maybe becoming president of the United States. His favorite subjects are science, music, and mathematics. Out of sheer boredom he struggles with Social Studies and English. For this reason he has enlisted in tutoring assistance.

Beyond the school for maybe half a mile is an intersection, where a proud stop sign stands. This stop sign is also the local city bus strop utilized by school children who walk together as a group. Today Avinay is lagging, consumed in his own thoughts. Suddenly he hears a rustle in the woodside hedges. He pauses upon seeing the bushes move. Out steps a well dressed man wearing a starched suit and tie, and an expensive snow white Stetson fedora.

"Hello, and how are you, son?," the smiling man says.

"I'm fine, and who are you, may I ask?," Avinay replied to this gentlemanly seeming man.

“People call me Mr. Goreman,” the smiling man replied. “You are a very intelligent young man, so everybody tells me. I have something I want to show you.”

Avinay’s heart races as though it is soon to leap from his breast. He doesn’t feel right going anywhere with this man, but he’s tempted out of overwhelming curiosity. This old man, Mr. Gordman grabs him by the left arm, leading him leftward into the wood stand. The two walk along in a slow steady but strong stride through the thick woods. Avinay is fascinated by the vegetative scenes. Entering inside was like being on another planet, he thought to himself.

The woods suddenly begin to open up. Towards the left some thirty yards out, they pass a huge black walnut tree, where the ruined brick chimney of an old plantation home once stood. A rather large, stirring bee hive is inside that huge old tree at a hole where a limb rotted away long ago. They must have covered miles, but it didn’t seem as if much time passed.

“Mr. Gordman, where are we going?”

“Be patient and observant, young man, you’ll see,” Goreman replied.

As Avinay peers through the thinning trees, he sees an old, army green, Chevy Chevelle parked in the distance.

“Who is that parked out yonder ways, Mr. Goreman?”

“Be quiet, observe, and follow me,” Goreman firmly replied as Avinay felt the grip on his arm suddenly tighten.

As the two walk closer, Avinay notices a very narrow, winding two lane hard surfaced road, and this green car sitting tightly up against the curb on his side. When the two approach the car, Gordman grabs the door handle on the passenger side, jerking it open, then shoves Avinay into a rather musty smelling leather covered back seat. The feeling Avinay has is that the car was sitting up for a long span of time somewhere.

The driver was a thin, much younger man than Mr. Goreman. He wore a T-shirt and faded leather blue jeans. His greasy black hair was almost shoulder length. He glanced upward into the rear view mirror, seemingly smiling and laughing at Avinay.

“Hang on son, cause you are now on the ride of a lifetime,” Mr. Goreman told him.

Avinay is quiet and very observant. Deep down he feels he made a serious mistake. He should have run like mad when he saw Goreman. *No such situation will ever happen again,* he says to himself in silence. The road winds and twists throughout the woods surrounding McKinney. Suddenly this car turns beside a taller and thicker than average holly tree. Now it is going far down into the deep mountain woods. It feels like they traveled for hours, covering many miles before the car pauses underneath a massive sour gum tree.

When the car stops, the driver and Mr. Goreman exit. Mr. Goreman replaces his nice starched and ironed suit with well worn army camouflage and an army green wool shirt. The driver walks around and stretches for a bit, while Goreman changes his clothing. Strangely something was now different about Goreman standing there before him, wearing nothing but his underwear. His naturally brown skin seems to bear an eerie metallic sparkle in the sunlight, as did the driver’s. Both glance backward toward him with an imposing sneer on their faces, although Goreman catches himself and assumes his familiar pleasant composure.

Up ahead there is a well worn, narrow foot trail, veering off toward the left hand side.

“Follow me son, ” Goreman told him, firmly grabbing his left wrist again.

The two walk down this well worn footpath, seemingly running along narrow edges of the mountain. Avinay feels he and Goreman walk several hundred yards out, gradually moving up a mountain. The driver remained behind the car.

“What mountain is this?,” Avinay asked.

“That question is not important at the moment,” fires Goreman. “ Keep your eyes and mind focused on what lies ahead, son.”

They seem to be nearing a hill crest of some sort. He notices the mouth of a cave from behind a boulder jutting out from the hillside. The mouth of this cave is actually much larger than it appears from the outside. He can hear a slight sound of dripping water on the inside, yet sees none at all. After the two walk deeper inside, the cave begins to narrow. To the right hand side the boy notices a sudden extension in the cave wall. This extension is filled by what appears to be white spider webs. Therein stands six motionless adults, seemingly frozen into eternal stillness. They appear somewhat young, but older than himself.

“Are those people dead?,” asked Avinay.

“They are alive and well. However, they now bear no alternative but to follow the cause of individual liberty, and our united heritage call,” Goreman curtly informed Avinay. “Such reality shall soon be every person’s future throughout the entire hallowed territory. All people shall soon serve the cause of goddess, Libertia, and the sacred avenging ghosts of Forrest, Ebaneezer, and the mighty Quantrel, or be swept away into the waste bin of history for all infinity!”

As the two walk past the six adults standing nude behind the spider webs, the expressions upon their frozen faces seem as one horrified. The feeling Avinay has is as if they were screaming for help before they were petrified. Several seem to have deep lash marks across their breasts, stomachs, and faces. Silently he wonders what horrors they surely must have endured.

They pass the frozen people inside the spider webs. The two enter inside another cave chamber. Inside the center of this chamber stands a square shaped stone platform, five feet high by seven feet wide. Mr. Goreman walks over toward this platform. Against the chamber wall leans stacks of dried black birch, He picks armloads of this up, piling them inside the center of

this stone platform. He begins to crisscross the individual wooden sticks into an organized heap in the center.

"Behold, the sacred altar to Eleuthera, the great sky goddess of our anointed ancestors, and her daughter goddess, Libera. Seek the wisdom of light, that you might know the eternal truth, oh son of the dark void in the mortal world beyond. "

Around a nearby stone corner he hears a sudden stirr as the flames climb. A beseeching bleat suddenly blares as if something ominous is sensed. Mr. Goreman stacks his last stick, then ambles toward the corner from where the bleat originates. He remains behind the stone corner until the flames diminish into a growing bed of coals. The passing of time might have been fifteen minutes, but it seems as if five hours transpired. Soon Mr. Goreman rounds the corner holding a small tied goat.

"Oh divine god of the universe, revered by our ancestors for generations. Please receive and accept our blessed sacrifice. We pledge this blood sacrifice unto you and your daughter, in the name of all that is holy and liberated from the secular bonds of this earth, Amen and Amen."

Mr. Goreman raises the bleating goat onto the altar, drawing a razor sharp hunting knife from his side, sticking the point into the goat's throat, then slicing downward. Blood oozes out into the slightly concave inside of the altar flame.

"Oh dearest Eleuthera, please allow your children, the children of Powell, Forrest, and the great war leaders of old, to regain our fading individual liberties. Please grant us the right of life to live on our own terms, for the duration of all blessed infinity."

Upon completing his prayer, Mr. Goreman cuts the goat up into steak sized slices. These he places into the center of the glowing coals. These were completely cooked until the meat was

soft. He slides these steaks onto two sharpened sticks. One he hands to Avinay, trembling with fear at the mere thought.

"Sacrificial meat is good. Eat until you are filled, young one. Never worry, you shall not be harmed. The supreme commander didn't request your presence here for such a reason."

"I'm thirsty," said Avinay.

Mr. Goreman handed him a cup filled with divine nectar juice, telling him it was a gift from the sacred gods. Avinay turns the entire cup up. It tastes like tropical fruit punch, and he always was a huge fan of passion fruit.

All through the night an entire group of darkly hooded, nearly translucent figures with scary painted faces, chant poems and sing songs in a strange language Avinay could not comprehend. One time when he awakes there is a huge wooden X standing upright on the floor of the cave, with a wooden circle in its center. The X and the circle are aflame. These hooded figures stand before this flaming X and the circle, with their opened palms outstretched, chanting strange words in a rhythmic monotone. He wonders what they must be saying as he strains his eyes through a dream-like haze in which these events occur. He lays back down, instantly falling asleep.

When he wakes he is laying in the back seat of the same green car that transported him to the trail leading into this cave. The same unkempt long haired driver is behind the wheel. Mr. Goreman dons his perfectly starched suit and tie again. The car is parked up close to the concrete shoulder by the curb where he first stepped inside this area of the wood stand. Mr. Goreman turns saying;

"Excellent, you have awakened after a fine sleep, I see!"

Avinay gazes around.

“We’re back where I was when I first entered this car.”

“Precisely, how observant you are, young man,” Mr. Goreman says. “Now, when you are ready, if you step outside this door and turn your back toward this car, then walk directly straight back until you exit this wood stand, you’ll exit the woods exactly where I first met you, leading you to this car. It was a pleasure meeting you. I certainly hope you enjoyed your experience with the sons of Quantrel, Hinson, and the grand KFR.”

The level of good cheer is so great inside Avinay he can hardly contain himself. He struggles with himself to appear calm and in total control.

“It was definitely an experience alright. I suppose I’ll be seeing you around,” he said as he opens the door, then steps outside. He pushes the door, turns his back toward the car, then commences walking forward in a direct line. Being free feels so pleasant words simply don’t exist to explain it.

He walks through the woods calmly until he is in decent cover, then gradually picks up pace until he is in a full run. When the woods begin to thin he steps back outside by the road, only a few yards down from his bus stop. He doesn't know what time it is, but he feels as if it was near fifteen thirty. As he stands, gazing back out across the woods where he passed, he can see three small dragonfly helicopters moving, then pausing in various places immediately above the treetops. He can hear the yelps of hound dogs in the far distance. *Maybe it was hunting season*, he whispered to himself. After thirty minutes or so, he sees a crowd of school aged kids moving in his direction. Soon he recognises a few, who approach him.

“Where have you been for the past two days?,” several students ask him in a surprised voice.

“Oh, if I told you nobody would ever believe me,” he replies.

“Well the police and everybody has been searching all over for you. They have dogs, drones, and helicopters out searching the woods, Avinay. The news even had a clip all about you. People around here are shocked and upset. Why did you run off like that, Avinay? Some older college people got lost in the woods a short while back. The police thought you might be where they were. That wasn’t nice.”

Avinay makes no reply. He only sits quietly and straight faced for the entire ride. Finally the bus pauses in the driveway of his home. When he enters his mother rushes up, hugging him with all of her strength.

“Avinay we were so worried. I feared the worst,” she shudders as she trembles and weeps. “Where were you?”

He proceeds to tell her his story, and she stands there frozen in complete shock. She finally reaches the nerve to ask him;

“Who did you say these people told you they were?”

“The sons of Quantrel, Hinson, and the KFR,” he replied.

After thirty minutes or so, Doyal Holzman walks through the door after a day spent at the university. When he notices Avinay he is beside himself. He rushes up hugging him with all of his might. He proceeds to tell Doyal his story about what occurred. When he tells him who was responsible, Doyal immediately picks up the phone, calling the office of Forrest Griffin.

Doyal tells Griffin the entire story about what transpired with his son. Griffin asks for more specifics in regard to the nude people frozen behind spider webs he saw inside the cave. Doyal asks Avinay as he speaks on the phone. Griffin also expresses interest in knowing the names given to him as identifiers.. When Doyal tells him these names, he says he wants to meet with Avinay on the following Saturday. He wants to see where the green car was parked when he first

got inside. Also wants to ride with Avinay from that point, in an effort to track down the entrance to this cave complex he speaks of.

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Eric Alister motors on toward his home from the school where he was employed. Everything passed him by in a solid blur. He simply could not believe he was terminated simply because he refused to sign this UN endorsed document. What was he going to do? A career he had struggled to develop and keep, was now gone. What would he do? Teaching and being a principal was all he ever knew. The shock of the reality he had been thrusted into, was gradually moving in upon him.

He makes it home and his dear wife, Breanna, meets him at the door, hugging and kissing him.

"How was your day?," she asks.

"Not so good,"

"What happened?," she asks him.

"I guess I'm out of a job."

"What do you mean?," she asks in a voice of stress.

"Just what I said," he replies.

"For not signing that document?"

"Yes," he replies.

"Well why didn't you simply sign it and do as they asked, for crying out loud?"

"Because it went against everything I believe in, that's why Breanna!," he snaps.

“But we need that job. Our house payments and taxes don’t stop simply because you get out of work, Eric.”

“I’ll go to work doing whatever, I suppose.”

“But education is all you ever knew.”

“Maybe it's time I learn something else, ” Eric says.

“You’re right, because you’ll never get another education job, being charged with insubordination like that when you didn’t sign that stupid document.”

“But they were violating my constitutional rights, ” Eric returns

“You, the individual, have no rights anymore. All rights go to the collective group under UN sponsored law. At my job all of us have been lectured on this matter. I had the same document placed before me, and had the same feelings. I chose to sign that damn thing, Eric. Why? Because I needed that job, that’s why!”

“Well Breanna, my principals mean more to me than that job.”

“There is only one problem, however, Eric. Everywhere wants employees to sign this thing, even McDonald’s! Not only that, refusal to do so amounts to sedition, which is labeled a felony offense! You’re talking prison time here, Eric. They're going to come after you!”

Eric says nothing, he only gazes blankly ahead into what was materializing more as a very dismal future.

Chapter 7

The Monster

Eric's first day at home means he has much work to do. He continues moving his camping gear into the catacombs, in spite of all the attention these areas are recently receiving. Nobody ever comes out to his end of them, searching for anything. He often wonders if he was the only person who knows about these caves he visits, and the subterranean complexes inside his specific location. After all, the area is veiled inside a thicket hundreds of yards wide, out beyond the backside of his family's farm.

He doesn't really have a calculated plan. He is following sheer gut instinct alone. One thing he learned over his thirty years of life was that the haunting voices whispering in the breeze never led him astray, and the mysterious white face in his midnight window never appeared for no reason. Deep down he senses the worst lays close at hand, even when others surrounding him never have any hint of premonition.

Down inside the caves and catacombs a sensation of an unseen presence often overwhelms him. He discovers a large oval shaped mirror decorated on both ends in a series of dark iron swirls inside an abandoned Victorian era mansion on mainstreet in McKinney, and leaned it up

against a wall inside his primary catacomb chamber . When these sensations of an unseen subterranean presence overwhelm him, often a translucent female figure donning an emerald robe and hood, appears in the mirror. She speaks to him in a voice that floats upon the air inside the cave. She said her name is *Melino*, queen of the spirit *Banduri,* a name known by heritage locals to mean *clairvoyant*. She is capable of delivering blessings or dealing out curses at her own liberty. When she speaks he learned to listen long ago.

She instructed him to lay away extra firearms and ammunition many years ago, so he did. She told him when, where, and what types of food to lay back in storage, and he did without hesitation. She informed him of a great wicked, foreign enemy surrounding him, endeavoring to impose itself upon his land, and do him and his family great harm. He believed her. When it was time to run and vanish, she would always tell him so without fail. When or if, it finally came time to kill, she would most certainly let him know.

By her powerful instructions he vows in silence within himself, he would live and die. He has no friends, no true family, no special companions, so a sensation on the inside emanating from the talking mirror informed him. He was a *Lone Wolf*, as the Shawnee and Cherokee would have said years ago. There was no secret hidden from Sybal, and no place into which she could not view. Often when deep inside the cave, he perceived cheerful sounds of playing children male and female, seemingly originating from within the very heart of paradise itself. He also heard sounds originating from deep inside the heart of purgatory.

The sight of an eerie phosphorus rain suddenly fills the inner chamber of the stalactite chasm where he stores his food and spends the better part of his time laboring. This rain mysteriously evaporates before it hits the cave floor. Luckily, it never wets anything. A heavy scent of blood seems to foretell of an ominous future in store.

When he finally makes it back to his home his dear wife meets him at the door. She neither hugs or kisses him.

"Business is falling off at my job. Talk abounds about layoff. How did your job hunt go?"

"I didn't do any job hunting today, Breanna," he tells her.

"And why not? There is no sense in mucking around with this mess. Your principal's job is history now," she fires with an impatient glare upon her face.

"I haven't received my official paperwork. I should be receiving my termination papers soon, Breanna."

"Well the least you could do is fill out a few applications. Start searching online tonight," his wife fires. "I understand you are stressed. We need an income, Eric. These UN globalists know that, and that is how they are getting people to sign over their individual rights."

"We don't need them. We can all do very well on our own here in Powell County. We don't need out-landers around telling us how to live," Eric replies as he moves a few articles around in the living room,

"Eric, the problem is, they are here. All too soon they will be a majority. They feel differently about everything unfortunately, and we need an income."

"We could rent the house out here, and move back into the old home place. The land here we could rent out to a hunting club during fall and winter, and to one of these wildflower and bird watcher organizations popping up in town nowadays, where the people hike around, and take pictures. We would be alright, Breanna."

"Problem is Eric, nowadays even here in Powell County one must purchase a business license to rent anything out or farm. One must have one even to plant a household garden, or to hold a simple yard sale. In order to have one he must sign that same UN document, surrendering all of

his individual rights. He is compelled to hand over his weapons, ammo, and renounce his Christian or Judaic religious beliefs. If you were Muslim, however, the religious part would strangely remain in tact. You would need proof of your claim, so don't get any funky ideas."

"We'll do it illegally then, Brianna," Eric smiles and shrugs as he speaks.

"Well if we did that, we might as well be selling dope right along with it, since the penalties are almost the same. You are talking about a felony here, and ten years can-time minimum," Breanna replies.

"I'll run guns and make liquor, then. There is a long heritage of that in these parts."

Brianna sighs deeply as she pauses, gazing in his direction.

"Eric, you are being ridiculous with me, grasping at straws like you are. You wouldn't even make it out of the woods with the liquor this day and time. You came close to getting nailed going deer hunting last year. Didn't you wind up having to leave a beautiful buck down in the woods somewhere, I think you told me?"

"Yeah, but there has to be a way somehow. We have all of these resources at hand, but they might as well be sitting on the moon, judging from what you are standing there telling me."

"You are right, Eric, but reality is reality. America simply isn't a free country anymore, and you have no choice but to accept it, like the rest of traditionalist Powell County."

Eric gazes back toward his wife, sighing deeply.

"I'll motor down to Bryant's Hardware. Sometimes he needs help loading fertilizer and seed. He has a greenhouse out back that probably needs some work. He pays in cash, which I like best of all."

"A hundred dollars a week isn't going to be enough to keep this place going," his wife shakes her head saying.

“I’ll ride over toward the unemployment office and file. They may have some work I can put in for.”

“Like I have already told you, there is no escape from having to sign that UN document. You can’t even get unemployment without doing it, Eric, let alone search for work in that office!”

She wipes her eyes as she nearly comes to tears, slinging both hands in mounting frustration.

“I honestly don’t know what you are going to do, Eric, but you need to do something. I know that much!”

That night his wife, Brianna, sleeps in the room adjacent to his. Rain pours for enduring hours. Every now and then a sapphire flash of lightning illuminates the room. A heavy roll of thunder soon follows. His headrest is positioned against the wall across from the door. A large antique bay window is positioned across from the foot of his bed. The roll of thunder awakes him immediately after the midnight hour. He tosses a couple of times, but cannot not go back to sleep.

Following a flash of lightning, the white face instantly appears in his window. The pallid male face seems inflexible, and very ridgid. It gazes directly at him through the window as he lays motionless in bed. He gasps as his breath exits his body, when his heart races in absolute terror. Suddenly the face vanishes in a complete instant. He swallows hard as he attempts to go back to sleep. Eventually he manages to do so, but he has no idea how much time passed.

When he awakes the following morning around 0600, there is an envelope laying upon his dresser top. It has the words *open me* scribbled in an unfamiliar printed handwriting. He does this, revealing a note with large letters printed on it. The letters read; *Heed the call*.

His heart sinks to the floor. Obviously, he has been singled out. He wonders why. Who wants him? Elders warned him since youth about consequences to disobedience. Only a priesthood

guiding a demon army can project spiritual invitations. Ebaneezer Powell was invited, so the local accounts went. So were Hinson, and Forest. So were the ancient moor-land guardians who purged Powell County and the entire region of infectious people and influences over the ages. Indeed, was such an occurrence what he was dealing with here? He has been invited into what? Where would he go? What was he supposed to do? There are so many disturbing questions needing answers.

When the sun beamed through his bay window, he puts on his blue jeans, brogans, and a T-shirt, getting into his mid-sized Volvo station wagon. He doesn't even bother making coffee at home or saying goodbye to his wife. He purchased this car a couple of years back. Thankfully, he managed to pay it off early. The only thing he hated about the car was not being able to work on it, since it was obviously designed intentionally with the purpose of making owners enslaved customers.

Lazarus Bryant's Hardware store appears in striking likeness to an old-time pack-house barn, with a decent front porch on the outside, and two large wooden rocking chairs on either side of the door. A swinging screen door always remained closed even when the main door was open. The store sits back a slight ways from the main road. Customers always fill the yard.

Eric steps out, walking up the wooden stairs onto the porch. From the porch he turns toward his left and clearly views all the way up to the curb on mainstreet. He pushes the screen door, causing an old cowbell to jingle, stepping on inside. Instinctively he headed toward the pot bellied wood stove in the rear, where hundred pound bags of dog food and nails were stacked. The caged baby chickens, ducks, and turkeys chirped loudly as he headed in that direction. A thick scent of starter and grower feed saturates the air.

Four elders gather around the pot-bellied stove. Eric didn't recognize any of them. One or two occasionally arises, assisting Lazarus in moving bags of feed toward the rear of the store, and placing tools onto the proper shelves. One of the elders with a weather beaten face, wears a white Stetson fedora with a wide brim. From its appearance he had it a while. He wears a cast away army jacket, shoving his hands deeply into his pockets, and hanging his head down. When Eric moves the tied bottom chair nearest him into place, then takes his seat, the elder suddenly picks his head up. A big toothy smile suddenly stretches over his thin face.

"There he is. I thought I'd see you before the day was out."

" Well hello, sir," Eric says as he eases his right hand forward.

The old man reaches his right hand out slowly. It trembled as he shook."

"I heard about your situation son," the elder said to him.

"You did, did you? I'm not sure I recall who you are."

"I'm Dameon Smokes, Jethro Smokes' brother. You knew Jethro. Everybody knew him. He was once the tobacco farmer over there on Spook Hill," the old man informs him. "He raised Burley, so people often remember riding by the fields, seeing him hang it up Indian style to air dry.

"Oh yes, I know who you are now," Eric snickers as he smiles.

The old man chuckles, then sighs, hanging his head again. Suddenly, he picks it back up.

"I know you've bound to have heard, but I don't know what happened to old damn Pap back in his day."

"I don't quite follow ya, but I think I know," Eric replies.

"Well he went on a crazy snap sometime way back in forty. I wasn't born yet, but he poisoned the whole family."

“That’s horrible,” Eric says with a glare of astonishment. “I knew there was something, but I couldn’t recall exactly.”

“Everybody died but Jethro and Mother. There were six of us back then. I wasn’t born yet.”

“What happened to your father?,” Eric asks him.

“They execute him in the electric chair.”

“That’s a terrible story, Dameon. Did your mother remarry?,” Eric asked.

“No, Pap didn’t die.”

“What on earth do you mean?,” Eric asks

“His shop-made boot heel had a W made onto its bottom. Pap always liked that style of boot because of its traction qualities. That W was seen in the soil around our house at the time Mother became pregnant. People tried to catch Pap at home, but nobody never could manage. One neighbor spotted the fresh tract one night, then called a friend who lived near the old prison yard where he was buried. The grave had been opened. This man promptly called the police who arrived at the gravesite, only to find it mysteriously filled in again.

“This weird chain of events occurred several times over. Eventually ole Pap’s coffin was exhumed. His corpse was inside alright this time,” the old man exclaimed. “This same chain of events continued on, however. Next time the grave was exhumed, Pap’s corpse was not inside. The family doesn’t exactly know what to make of it, son. Then my mother became pregnant with me. Everybody hereabouts says I look like Pap, Dameon suddenly smiles.”

“That’s a disturbing tale, to say the least, Dameon,” Eric said.

The old man nods, then smiles again.

“Yeah, so is yours. The secretary, Molly Haire, down at the Powell County Board of Education is my first cousin. She told me all about it. That same paper has been placed in front of her. They

gave her a week to make up her mind. A lady who runs her own local beauty parlor said Molly could do books there for her, and she would pay her cash."

"That's one way to deal with this situation," Eric said.

The old man leaned close to Eric, speaking in quiet tones.

"Look, a lot of people around here don't cotton to this mess, son. There's a group called The Booger Branch Boys. They've been around for a while. I don't rightly know how to tell ya to get up with them, but they have business connections. They are putting people up, down inside the catacombs. When the people lose their jobs and their homes, they can go live with these people. They can work in these underground businesses up in town there, trading in second clothing and tools, working inside restaurants, driving tourists around, and the like."

"They keep on talking about making money electronically based. How will it work then?," Eric asks.

"They're cutting their own coins called lines, jugs, arms, and pipes. One is for larger values, based on the value in a line of cocaine. Another is based on the value of treble run liquor in gallon jugs. Another is based on the value of a twenty two or twenty five caliber rifle. Smaller values are based on the value of a smoking pipe packed full with tobacco, or ammunition and powder"

"That's interesting," Eric said.

"Why is this group, The Booger Branch Boys, doing all of this?"

"It's about helping people, son, but it's also all about striking back, seeking to drive out the enemy from among us."

"It's strange how I haven't heard of anything such as this before," Eric said.

The old man sank backward into his tied bottom chair.

“Yeah, I thought you’d like to know this, son.”

Eric paused, staring hard at the old man in wonderment as he sat with his head hanging.

“I heard,” the old man said. “I heard all about it, I know. Look at me, boy, when I speak.”

Eric faces him directly into his eyes

“Ole damn Pap was in with the guardians. I mean,” he stumbles and gasps. “ My family had problems way back when. My Mother had some serious vice addictions. You know what I am speaking of here boy? She had a cushy office job down at the rail-road station. They handed her authority.”

There was a long pause.

“You know what I’m speaking of here boy,” Dameon suddenly whispers. “ I’m talking about carnal vice addictions. Mother was paid extra in money to overlook the supervisor’s embezzlement. Him and several others also paid her hush value in granting certain nefarious carnal favors no man anywhere else would. She was untouchable on her job. Out-landers are good for corrupting decent town folk, son.”

There was a momentary silence as Daemon commenced breathing heavily.

“Ole damn Pap’s rage was unquenchable, so he did what he did. The supervisor she worked for and the others she had dealings with, turned up dead within a year. The Family is like that boy, you hear me? They take care of their own, and right all wrongs needing righting.”

There is a long pause where nobody says anything.

“I’ll tell Lazarus this evening you want to help out, son. You just be here around 0800 tomorrow morning, ripe and ready to work,” the man tells him. “ Don’t waste precious time and energy worrying, son.”

Mr. Bryant is assisting customers, but Eric pauses to say hello anyway, as he walks around looking at various items the man put out for sale on his shelves. It is a nice display of wares tough to find anywhere else, such as solar lanterns, brace and bit with one inch augers, solar generators of numerous sizes, and more. He searched around for a while, then stepped back out of the store, down the wooden steps, and into his black Volvo.

Eric pulls into his driveway around twelve. He pauses at the mailbox. He can see his wife was home, since her car is parked in front of the door. As he is pulling out his mail, two envelopes catch his eye. One is from Powell County Board of Education. The other is from the State Investigator's office. His heart sinks into his lap as his blood runs cold. This negative situation callously thrust upon him, was undeniable reality now.

Eric slowly pulls up before the door of his house. The world around him appears as a dim blurry haze. He steps out of the car with the envelopes in hand, walking up his steps and into his front door. His wife has her back turned and is washing dishes, smiling as she turns to face him.

"How did things go today, honey?"

"Decent, I suppose."

"Did you land a job?," she asks

"I'm going into Mr. Bryant's hardware store tomorrow at eight in the morning."

"Well that's better than nothing," his wife replies as he opens the Board of Education envelope.

He pauses, reading the note aloud.

"Here on this day of March, 2022, Eric Alister has on this day been terminated from the position as principal at East Powell High. I guess I am officially out of a job now," he glances up and tells his wife.

“Well that was no real surprise to me, Eric,” his wife sighs.

“Here is another envelope from the State Investigator’s office.”

He opens this envelope, pausing to read the note.

“It states that an investigation was coordinated and I have been charged with activities in presumption of seditious intentions. Can you believe that, Breanna? Furthermore, influencing youth to participate in sedition constitutes a charge of felony. My court date has been scheduled in two months.”

His wife glares hard without speaking a single word.

“I suppose the worst is yet to come, Breanna.”

“All I know Eric, is where this mess is transforming into serious business. How did they claim you were influencing youth into sedition?”

“They claim in this note that by refusing to push this UN endorsed protocol for teaching history the way the new county management ordered me to, I am guilty of encouraging youth and others to act against the prevailing political agenda. I simply can’t believe this is happening in America. All of this amounts to tyranny, where they are imposing this collectivist political agenda,” he tells his wife.

“Well, have you got your plane ticket out of here yet?”

He pauses, staring at her when she speaks. He didn’t know exactly how to reply.

“What I am experiencing strongly reminds me of Socretes and his condemnation. He could have exited out, but chose not to on moralistic grounds, as he viewed the conception based on his own philosophical convictions. I have motivations and personal convictions made on moralistic grounds myself.

"Home territory suits me very well, Breanna. I haven't changed a single iota in my life long convictions and intentions. I still think the best, while I am determined to live my life on my own terms; since *the land of America is best ran underneath a government that places concerns of the individual first*, rather than acting to sacrifice the individual on a straw-man altar of progress, in the name of an imposed benefit made underneath a euphemistic feign of ideological and technological advancement handed down to the masses as a whole, as conceptualized by an elitist few bearing their own self-serving intentions. In the end, we, the people, choose our own destiny."

"All that I can say in response to your lecture here is; welcome to hell, because you are soon to live it. The simple way out is to accept the path magisterial fate has placed before you, and simply float with the drift, rather than paddle against it. Look at me for example here, Eric. I signed that darn document, for Pete's sake!

"Do you truly think I wanted to do it? No! I have religious convictions, and numerous other philosophical belief systems this ridiculous document violates . My outside body only signed that document pretending to give them up. I will never give up my convictions on the inside.

"As far as my weapons go, I've already handed in my concealed carry permits with my two derringer thirty eight pistols. From now on, for self protection I'll carry this usable ink pen with a needle pointed, razor edged blade in my purse and on my person. If somebody attacks me out on the streets when this protesting foolishness is going on, intending to treat me like some kind of an animal; then I'll behave like one, pulling my blade while I strike with everything I have to throw toward the eyes and the throat. Yes it's illegal, but the prevailing political agenda says with me being female, I have a right to self protection. You men truly are in a different situation on these grounds this day and time, I understand, but such is the way of things, Eric."

All that day Breanna ceases in speaking with her husband, Eric. Eric continues moving more basic living items from the home, into the caverns and caves scattered high up on Shadow Man Mountain, and Stikini Hill, two of the thickest, most mysterious land tracts found anywhere in the Appalachian Mountain range. A disturbing sensation of raw terror consums even skepitical indivciduals, who simply stand afar gazing upon these two geological forms. Planes and helicopters flying over frequently report major instrumental disturbances, with pilots claiming sensations of fainting at the controls. Many reports tell of invisible entities assuming control of the vehicle. When darkness falls and bedtime arrives, Brianna sleeps in the other room by herself.

Eric lays awake in his bed for more than two hours. It was already dark when he arrived back home. During the entire day while he was out, he senses an unseen presence immediately beside him. The general sensation inside the atmosphere surrounding him is one of immense power and authority. He is startled, but does not fear at this point. On the inside he knows the direction in which everything is headed, although he does not know how to put it into words.

On the outside the wind suddenly picks up. A flash of lightning illuminates the room. He sees the rugged pallid white face at his window. The figure dons a greenish, almost cerulean robe and hood. Maybe the hue of its robe is tainted by the sapphire brilliance of the lightning flash. The figure has a skeleton's hands, and inside its right hand holds what appears to be a black handled scythe.

This figure gazes at him with gaping eyes, as sensations of a powerful presence virtually overwhelm him physically and mentally. The thunder rolls long and rumbles loud as rain hammers the window. The wind puffs hard against the house walls, making a slight howl inside the room itself. This roar abruptly transforms into a clearly audible voice, saying;" *the long*

prophesied moment has arrived Eric Alister!" This phrase is repeated seven times, so Eric counts, as his heart races to a point where it nearly leaps from his very breast. A lump forms inside his throat and stomach to a point where he feels nauseous.

When he awakes the following morning, he takes his time sipping his black coffee. He wasn't in a big hurry. He planned on motoring down to Bryant's Hardware around 0900. Mr. Bryant has some biddy mash he needed separating from a few hundred pound bags, then measured out into single and half pound brown paper bags. The seed containers needed filling, and a few other odds and ends tied up, while the old man dutifully tended to customers, as he had for more than fifty years now. Mr. Bryant even manages to craft him a key to the store, offering him the coveted job of opening up on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. On these days Mr. Bryant might not arrive until 1000. The carousing elders were always happy to see him.

On his way out he pauses by the mailbox. One envelope is a tax notice from the Powell County tax office. The other is a notice from his mortgage company, Stronega & Pullman. There is also a notice from his homeowner's insurance company and the local Employment Security Commission. *What on earth could these be about?*, he thinks to himself as he stoops back into his car. *He paid his taxes, his mortgage, and his insurance bills for the month.* What could be going on with this?

He motors on out toward Bryant's Hardware. When he walks inside Mr. Bryant is already present, and the elders are gathering faithfully around the woodstove. One of them is punching what remains of the coals from the day before with a three-eighths piece of rebar, while another fetches in an armload of dried stovewood splits. Carrying the wood while donning a beautiful starched, dry cleaned double breasted suit and tie, did not appear to bother this man.

Mr. Bryant loves for Eric to put the coffee on and sit the mayonnaise, sliced ham, and bread on the small coffee table beside the old time cash register he uses to separate nail, ammo, pullet, and feed charges. These are his cash generators. A neat plastic ice cream pail collects the dollar fee for a single sandwich and a cup of coffee. Styrofoam cups filled with Marlboro cigarettes, Boone Hall Plantation hand-rolled cigars, and pipe tobacco sold by the hefty pinch. Mr. Bryant also loves for Eric to have a seat and a cup of coffee, as he interacts with the elders first thing in the morning.

He smiles, throwing together a ham sandwich, then tosses four quarters into the cup. He pulls up a tied bottom chair close to the pot-belly stove, nodding hello, taking a bite and sipping his morning coffee. To his right hand side sits the old faithful, all knowing elder, Comanche. The old man smiles broadly as Eric bites his ham and light-bread. He leans forward in his direction as Eric continues eating.

“I hope you’ve been paying attention to the local news. That boy, what is his name? The one from here who is the reporter..”

Eric chews and swallows hard.

“Tyson Walsky?”

“Yeah, that’s him. I couldn’t remember what that furrin name was that boy had.”

Eric takes another bite.

“He put your face all up on the news, about you not signing that UN document there. He says there will be severe repercussions. He said they terminated your employment. Is that true?”

Eric swallows again.

“I’m afraid it is, sir.”

Eric begins eating.

“I want you to know personally son, I am proud of you. It makes me feel good to know that Powell County still has some real men alive and well in it. Clan Alister was always loyal to its patrimonial inheritance and its blood. I have good news for you, son,” he speaks as he leans over again in Eric’s direction.

Eric swallows.

“What’s that, sir?”

“They are going to cut out my retirement, cause I didn’t sign it either.”

“What are you going to do?,” asks Eric in a voice of concern.

“Well, one of the boys from my church is scared his job will fire him when the time comes that they put that document in front of him, so he asked me to teach him how to set up a liquor still and make it shine. I’m going to show him how to make Powell County’s best, that's what I’ll do!”

“Sounds like a plan to me,” Eric says as he takes another bite.

“I’m going to show him how to reload ammunition, and build a custom made twenty five twenty rolling block for him. I’m going to show him how to do all of that too. He wants to know how to hang wire out for deer, set artificial den traps, and build fish weirs. In return he is going to pay my monthly bills for me, and cut me a small bit of spending cash. He wants to know how to plant a garden, keep an old car going, hide stuff in the ground, can food, and more. I’m working as a teacher nowadays, Hoss. Can you believe it?”

“That’s wonderful, Comanche,” repliesEric. “He must be one of those big city people.”

“No he’s local, he just grew up a mama’s boy. He’s grown and married now. He sees the worst of everything coming, like the rest of us around here who know better, that’s all.”

“Seems that way,” Eric replies as he takes another bite.

“By the way, son, what other things are they going to do to you for not signing that UN garbage?”

“I don’t know yet myself,” Eric replies.

He glances down at the notices laying across his thigh that he picked up from the mailbox earlier on that morning. He grabs up the local tax notice first. He proceeds to open the envelope. When he opened the note, in large bold print were the words Delinquency Notice. According to this note he owes three thousand dollars in political agenda noncompliance penalty fees. All of this was payable upon his signature of the UN Constitution of Universal Collectivist Confederation.

He would have seven days to comply, or else confiscation of all personal real estate, automobiles, and transportational vehicles would commence, since noncompliance to the UN collectivist mandate is a criminal offense. His mind doesn’t want to believe what his eyes are reading.

“Something is upsetting you mightily, boy,” said Commanche. “I kin see it clearly in yer eyes.”

Eric makes no reply. He thrusts down the tax notice, then snatches up the insurance note. He rips open the envelope.

This note is to hereby inform the reader of a homeowners insurance cancellation, Eric reads in silence. *UN mandage stipulates signature of the UN Constitution of Universal Collectivist Confederation, under an oath of allegiance, as witnessed, stamped, and notarized by an Officer of Mandate Compliance down at Mckinney City Hall.*

“Something with you is not faring so well,” Comanche says. “You may speak to me as you feel son, I’m always available.”

Eric grabs his mortgage note. He hesitates to open it as he sighs deeply. He almost already knows what is awaiting his watering eyes on the inside. Sure enough, it too is a delinquency notice, for a three thousand dollar penalty fee, payable upon signature of the mandated UN document, of course.

When City Hall or the out of state mortgage company desires too, he knows well how they could snatch a person's property directly out from underneath his feet inside a month's time, or even a week when it comes to non-payment of taxes. People claim when he publicly said so in the past, that doing so is against the law. It may be against the law somewhere, but Powell County is fast becoming a totally different place from what it once was, and he knows so for a fact.

This fact became reality maybe some five years ago, when big city out-landers suddenly replaced heritage locals, who once were employed in county facilities such as the local tax office, the homeowners insurance building, and the local mortgage company. Even City Hall itself was once operated by locals, but not so any longer. These often rude, inflexible, arrogant wardens of collectivist ideology, seem hell bent on causing institutionally imposed harm to any person even *suspected* of not harboring similar Fabian convictions.

Eric lowers the notice, swallowing hard, gazing blankly out the front door of the store.

"What's the matter there, feller? Something is a biting at you for sure," Comanche asks.

"I'll speak about it later on. There is work to do right now," he replies.

He steps out toward the area away from the wood stove, where the cages of chicks are stacked one on top of the other. In front of these cages is where the dog and chicken feed was stacked in large hundred pound bags. A customer is paying at the cash register, so Eric takes his money,

rings him up; then steps over, picking up a single bag of Gravy Train, tossing it upon his shoulder and heads out toward the man's pickup truck.

As he lays the bag down he could see throngs of protesters eighteen to twenty five years or so old, wearing their baggy pajamas, with multiple large rings stuck in their eyebrows, their noses, with gross obscene tattoos covering their arms, necks, and faces; lining up and down Mainstreet, carrying signs with a variety of outraging statements written in large bold lettering on the front.

One sign says *down with tradition, and up with progress*. Another sign beside it screams *Ebaneezer Powell was an evil man, but we don't have to be.* A person farther down the line chants *"Jefferson was a hypocrite, but a nation that calls itself free and embraces him, isn't worth a shit!* The others chant along, *"What do we want? We want it to end! We know we're not wrong, raw progression must commence!"*

Several women are topless, with rings stuck through their nipples, staggering along as if they are almost drunk, hugging and kissing one another directly in the mouth.

" I wish you'd just look at that disgusting bullshit. Ever-where I go I have to either see these disgusting lookin' furrin son of bitches, or hear 'em. Don't know bot you boy, but I'm a bot tired of it myself."

The customer turns to spit a mouthful of tobacco juice in the direction of the protesters.

Eric gazes solidly forward in the direction of the protesters, frozen momentarily.

"If you only knew how I felt about everything around here right about now myself," he mumbles to the customer as he continues to gaze.

"Let me tell you something, son. Last night one of these bastards tried to set fire to the Market House. I mean, these sick sons of bitches move into here from God knows where, then all they want to do is belly ache and complain about everything like they do? Then they come in here and

try to destroy our heritage, and take what we've struggled for so long, and fought for so long to keep?," the man rages.

"It sure appears that way," Eric replies to the customer while he continues to gaze at the protesters.

"You listen to me, and you listen good, son, when I speak. The KFR is going to get in on this mess. Lots of people around here are watching all of this garbage, and having to deal with this hogwash about the UN taking ever-body's rights away. I hear ever-day about folks being fired from their jobs and losing ever-thing they own over this junk, son. The KFR ain't far from makin' a move, son. I don't know anything about you, boy, but you just mark what I said. This mess and these sorry people ain't welcome here in Powell County."

Eric never replies as the man gets into his aging pickup truck, slams the door, then drives away. He turns and drives as the protesters seemingly stumble along, going in the opposite direction from the downtown area, passing the hardware store, toward the Market House. Several protesters glare hard at the man as he motors on past, sticking up their middle fingers, shoving them toward him as he sits inside his pickup truck. *Why did they behave like that toward that elderly man?* Eric thinks in silence. *He didn't do anything to the likes of them*. He never did anything negative in return, even when they disrespected him as they did.

Eric turns, then walks on back into the hardware store. He saunters over toward the biddy mash and the cracked corn chicken feed. He tears open a bag, and begins spooning out the contents into a tipping receptor on top of a weighing scale, sitting near the cash register. When he dips exactly a pound into the tip, he places a brown paper bag on the tipper spout, leans it over to dump the contents into the brown bag, rolling down the top and taping it closed. With a red magic marker he writes the words *biddy mash, 1 pound.* A few elders entering are illiterate, but

know what it is by looking at the bag and sniffing it, and know how much it weighs by picking it up. They simply couldn't be fooled for a moment.

Outside noise from the protesters is louder. As Eric continues laboring while kneeling before the bag on the floor, the cowbell at the entry door jingles twice. Behind him as he labored he hears four sets of feet shuffling down the isles where the main register is near the front. Eric snaps around, seeing nothing. Mr. Bryant turns around with the counter toward his back, facing the aisle where the shuffling feet disappear. He wears a hard expression on his face. Eric turns back around, continuing to fill the one pound brown paper bags. He can hear the shuffling feet stop half way through the store.

He glances back around. He didn't want to, but he did so involuntarily. There standing in the exact open center of the store, are two of the filthiest human beings he ever laid eyes on. One has large drooping breasts, so he assumes it is a female. Her hair is painted white in spots, pink in other spots, and blue. It is cropped short, nearly into a GI trim. Her lips are painted dark purple, and her face from the nose down, snow white.

Her clothes are deeply faded and soiled jeans, with the knees ripped out. Her shirt is a thin see through material, dirty brown with black spots the size of marbles. She very obviously wears no bra underneath her shirt. She appears as if she might burst out of her nearly rotten appearing pants. She gazes at him hard with her mouth gaped open, in a nearly subhuman kind of way.

The man is certainly no better dressed. He wears a ragged, coal black felt hat, with a small rim, appearing way too small for his head. He is dressed in exactly the same type of clothing, same colors, same style of the woman. Upon his feet he wears heavy black leather boots. His hair is cut and colored in exact likeness to the woman.

The man and the woman have rows of thick rings punched through both lips, both ears, and tattoos of witches, butterflies, and dragons covering them on their necks and both arms. The man even has two on his face. He glares back at Eric with the identical subhuman gaping mouth empty minded stare. The woman may stand five feet three, and is maybe three hundred pounds, while the man is maybe six foot four, and three hundred fifty pounds.

Eric gazes back, breathing heavily in shock at the horrid sight glaring in his direction immediately before him. *Had his porch hound been there, he'd have virtually lost his mind there in the store at this sight*, he thinks in silence to himself.

"My God, what is it?," he gasps underneath his breath. "Is this what decent humanity has mutated and degenerated into, for heaven's sake? Am I having a paranormal experience here?"

"Great goonie goo-goo!," the male monster suddenly slurs while gazing back at him.

The female tilts her head to the left hand side, glaring hard in his direction.

"Wait a minute, Gross, I think I know him," she says in a slightly inebriated voice.

A scent of dirty sweat and burnt marijuanna begins to permeate the room. The male monster chuckles slightly, speaking loudly.

"You mean you know ole limp-rod there, Mud-Sow," he gruffs through a dirty, whisker scattered face as he continues to glare. "I don't know if I wanna slop with you anymore, knowing the likes of ole Codd-Wad over there."

As both of them turn to walk back out toward the door, the female slaps the male hard on the backside with the flat of her left hand.

"You'll slop with me when you want to jiggle tonight. The whole parlor is going to be there, watching us put on a good show, man. You remember, ole booty breath Bull-Nuts wanted to film

our show we're putting on for 'em, so you had better be up to doing me right, dragon breath, that's all I have to say about anything!"

The female pauses before walking through the door of the hardware store, turning back around, glaring hard in Eric's direction.

"I swear I know that Moth-Daddy back there," she says. Where is it I've seen him before, Gross?"

"Will you turn back around here today? I know a few things I'm not doing for you tonight, you sick Sow, you!," the man gruffs from outside the door, toward the woman as she stands on the inside.

"Well that's alright," the female says as she turns back around, stepping through the door. "I'll get Mighty Python to do everything you won't do that I need, Gross. Matter of fact, I might ask him to join in anyway, when the film production begins!"

The male gets all excited and makes an incomprehensible reply as the two stumble back out toward the main road.

Eric stands in absolute shock, gazing out toward the door of the hardware store. Every elder who is present gazes in the other's direction. Comanche then slowly glares over toward Eric.

"What the hell is this world coming to, men?"

Ross Cuddly, another elder, who always wears bibed coveralls, sits by the stove chewing beechnut tobacco, never saying anything. He suddenly begins shaking his head from side to side.

"Did the Russians drop a silent contamination bomb on us that we don't know about yet? Were them two things that were just in here human, or were they the Sasquatch we've always heard about?"

The elder on the opposite side of the stove, leans backward in his tie bottom chair, gazing hard toward Eric. A thin smile forces itself across an aged, snaggle toothed mouth.

"That filthy Sow said she knew you, boy."

A jeering smile suddenly oozes across his face, replacing the original one.

" Did ya get liquored up and jiggle wid it one cold dark and lonely night, a time ago back in the past?" He explodes into laughter. "You can just be out with it an tell us boy, we've heard it all around here."

The man continues chewing his tobacco and gazing at Eric.

" She was a lookin' at you hard and lickin' them joules, son!"

He glares around at the others, exploding into laughter with all of his might.

"I swear, that damn sure was some ugly stuff, is all I got to say about it," he continues on, shaking his head, chuckling, and gazing at Eric as he speaks. "I once knew a man back in seventy three, who found a woman in the old Yeller Yank Tavern over on Bugaroo Boulevard, at least that dum ugly if not more so. I will say, however, that this bitch had a set of gollywhopper three gallon sized tits a hangin' on that grotesque body she had. Hell, he paid three hundred dollars just to lay down with that thang!

" Nobody in all of Powell County could believe the story when it was told. It was the dum truth though, I tell ya. A-bot nine months later the man wound up a marrying this bitch! I will say that this man came from a fine family. He wasn't white trash, by no stretch of the imagination. It sure must have been good, is all I have to say about it. Some men are just hard up like that. I used to be, to be honest about it, but age has worn me down at least a good notch or four, I tell ya."

The others never make any reply. Eric turns toward him without smiling, saying nothing, then turns away, gazing hard at the screen door where the cowbell hangs patiently waiting for the next entering customer.

Chapter 8

A Reaping

Eric remains busy at the store until four o'clock that evening. As he exits out, protesters are congregating in Liberty Park, by the Market House. He enters his car, driving home without incident. When he pulls up into his driveway, his wife's car is already parked. He pulls up beside her car, exits out, walking inside through the front door. Breanna is standing there to greet him.

"Hello," she says, "how was your day?"

“It was alright,” Eric replies, not really feeling like speaking much.

“Do you have any good news?

“No, not really,” Eric replies as he glances sideways in her direction.

“Well, neither do I,” she says.

“What happened to you?”

“My job was laid off. I’m out of work,” she tells him. “They say they will call when it starts back up, but nobody knows when that will be.”

“I have worse news,” Eric sighs as he speaks. “ I received letters from the mortgage company and the local tax office. They are penalizing me thousands of dollars for not signing that UN document. Either I pay the money and sign the document, or they are confiscating everything we own, including our vehicles. I don’t have the money nor the heart to sign that document.”

A disturbed expression overcomes his wife’s face.

“What are we going to do, Eric? I told you to sign that damn thing way back when this mess first began. I was told they were going to do such a thing not long ago. Any way one can dream up to skate around it is illegal. I read where a person can’t even leave the country without signing that document. I have signed it, but I am married to a person who hasn’t, so that puts me into the same boiling pot as you.”

“They will not allow you to sign anything, take out a loan, or do anything?,” Eric asks with an air of concern in his voice..

“Nothing at all.”

She sighs deeply, then turns her head to look directly into his face.

“It's all coming down to this, Eric. You either sign that document and come up with that money somehow, or else I’m taking the kids, filing for divorse, and moving back in with my parents. I

mean, you have been a great husband, but you can no longer provide for us economically. What other choices do I have? When I choose divorce, with the children I can get all kinds of back taxes and government financial assistance. I could even get a decent government apartment in time. I mean, you chose your path, Eric, now I must choose mine, and me and our kids ain't living in any cave somewhere deep down in the back woods of Powell County, hear me"

"Is that how it is? You simply run out like that?"

"Seriously Eric, what are my choices? I, however, think I know what your response is to my question; and honey, I'll tell you right now, this cow-girl aint living in no cave. Fred Flintstone and Wilma were cartoons, and I'm not about to be some real life examples of them."

There was a pause of silence.

"Nobody has taken our house yet," Eric calmly informs her.

"Yeah, that's true, but it will probably happen, and when it does, I'll have no other choice but to take the kids and leave."

For the next three days Eric works over at Lazarus Bryant's Hardware store, then drives back home. The protesters are still gathering at the Market House in swelling numbers every day. He hears the elders speak about what they are saying, but he hears nothing first hand. When he drives home on Wednesday evening, papers are pasted onto his front door. He opens the papers. At the top of the note are the words, *eviction notice* in large bold letters, par the mortgage company on behalf of City Hall. He has only a week to vacate all premises, or be subject to immediate arrest.

He simply refuses to believe what his eyes were seeing. This is America, for crying out loud here! When his wife drives home an hour later, as he stands gazing upon the note, he is astonished to discover where she is already packing up.

“I was here at the house when they delivered that note, Eric. I didn’t answer the door when they knocked. I knew what it was without looking. There is nothing else left for me to do. I’ll be out with the kids by tomorrow evening.”

All he can do is stand there, while his world falls apart. He never experienced such a traumatic event before in his entire life. His life always was on an upswing. He actually thought about paying the fines and signing the document. When he goes to the bank and tries to withdraw his cash savings, his account is frozen. Matter of fact, all of his funds were. The only money now in his possession was the gold and silver coins he stashed deep down inside the caverns. His life was ruined.

Next morning when he motors down to Bryant’s hardware store, the elders tell him news about his property being confiscated all over the television. There were also claims of processes initiating to charge him with sedition, and encouragement of seditious activities.

“Son, I don’t know what you are going to do, but all I do know is that not much time remains,” Comanche tells him in earnest.

A time of silence transpires, then Comanche speaks up.

“You know, years ago, back in ‘95, I believe it was, there was a man on the run deep in these hills. He set off a bomb inside some government building in Atlanta, and killed a bunch of people, but he was from these hills. Well, the government sent in the best bounty hunters and trackers, including the US Special Forces. There was a multi-million dollar bounty on his head, but all of their best failed to catch that man. He stayed on the lam fer mite-near five years. Then one night he tired of this lifestyle, walked back down into town here, and turned himself into a rookie cop sitting near a trash dumpster.

"I'm telling you that story, boy, because you haint committed no crime like that. If a man at war can outfox the government's best and last five years, then a man at peace could go on fer a lifetime, eh?"

Eric never speaks a single word in reply, he only gazes out toward the front screen door of the store. The reality of his negative situation was striking him hard right about now. By the time he makes it home his wife and family would be gone. At twelve noon Monday the police would appear at his door to arrest him for trespass, since he was now evicted from his own home. How could such a thing be happening in America, over a damn foreign document going against everything decent folks ever stood for or believed in?

He longs for the day to endure. He dreads the drive home. When he finally pulls into his driveway, his wife's car is gone. He casually steps out of the car, walking up his steps, then unlocking the door to his house. Something feels missing and not right. He steps into his room, and his closet is empty except for his clothes. He turns back around, stepping into the children's rooms. They are empty, the beds and all the furniture are gone. His wife must have paid somebody to assist her in the move. *His ten year marriage is over now*, he sighs as he whispers. When Monday rolls around, he will be out of the house. He has no alternative choices.

All weekend long he removes the final selections of his clothing, and his tools, taking them down into the catacombs. Come Monday, he would be walking into Bryant's hardware, since his car was destined for police confiscation as well. He had fines to pay on it, and likewise, couldn't pay them without signing that UN document. When everything is removed of value from the car, he closes the door, and determines not to make his move out until Monday morning.

Throughout the night the thunder rolls and the lightning flashes, as he lays upon his soft couch gazing up at the ceiling. Finally he fades off to sleep. He opens his eyes, glancing at his wind up

clock sitting beside the couch. It was 0300. The thunder is rolling with more intensity, and the lightning flashes with increasing frequency. He senses a presence inside his house, then he sees it in the flashing sapphire illumination. A hazy male figure looming before him, donning a dark cloak and hood. “Is he still asleep and is this a nightmare dream?,” he asks himself aloud.

“ Eric of Clan Alister, the sacred call has been made, the conviction has been determined. Blood beckons for redemption! Territory demands liberation,” an audible whispering voice speaks as if it hangs on the very air inside the home.

His heart races with sensations of it leaping up into his very throat. His stomach trembles with raw terror as it knots up on the inside.

“Who are you?,” he struggles to ask the translucent, almost mist-like figure.

“The power of guardian spirits combined with fate, and the selection has already been pronounced,” the mysterious voice informs him.

“What are you speaking about? I don’t understand!,” he rages aloud in the darkness.

The rolling thunder crashes, shaking his house. When the lightning flashes the hooded form is gone. Even so, sensations of an unseen presence linger in the gloom of early morning. *“Maybe it was a bad dream*,” he sighs aloud as he rolls over on his right side and closes his eyes.

When he opens his eyes, bars of sunlight slash through the darkness. Sensations of unseen presence vanish. In spite of losing his home, he actually feels cheerful. He knows from past experience, relationships must end in order for one to appreciate the quality of a life he once knew. This entire deal, far as he is concerned now, is only another one of those times.

He packs in his Ruger Security thirty eight, with fifteen rounds in the clip. He keeps another clip tucked away inside his left hip pocket. Inside his right hip pocket he carries his switchblade. He takes a small backpack, dropping in a can of Pepsi, a sandwich, and an apple. He also carries

an ink pen and a small note pad. He slings this bag over his left shoulder, then heads out the door. He pauses, glancing backward one final time before turning to walk downtown toward the hardware store. He may or may not ever return to the house, but then, who knows what fate has in store?

As he walks along beside the road with his bag slung across his shoulder, passengers inside passing cars often turn to glare at him plodding along. These glares bear an anticipation of potential antagonism to his observing eye, but *maybe such convictions are all in his mind*, he tells himself in silence. By the time he nears Liberty Park, protesters are gathering. In a long line of people carrying billboard signs, he recognizes the two who were inside the store a few days earlier. They both glare at him hard as he walks along in the brisk morning air, facing them as they move in the opposite direction. This woman, still dressed in the same clothing it seems, leans back toward the man, speaking in a very audible tone. He can smell her lack of personal hygiene saturating the air when he passes.

"Hey Gross, there is that Moth-Daddy from the hardware store we seen the other day. I know that man. Where have I known him from?"

"Did you once know him, Sow, or do you want to know him?," the unkosher male asks her.

"Wait a minute," she sighs, " I know who he is! Gross, he's the principal from East Powell!"

"Are you sure, Sow, or have you puffed too much fog this morning from your glass pipe?"

"No seriously, it's the one Donkey Dick was telling me about last night. He claimed his picture was all over the news over the past few days."

"Are you sure? That idiot was high as a kite when he told you all of this, Sow."

"No, I mean it, that's the one, the one who was fired for not signing that document going around everywhere. You know, that document that's going to change this world we are in."

“Oh, so you mean he’s one of those blocks trying to hold everything we are working for back around here, Sow?”

“Yeah,” the female replies.

“Well, later on, us and a few lusty boys might have to investigate this,” the male says.

Eric pauses, glancing backward to see if it was him they were speaking of, then turns back around and keeps on walking.

Finally he makes his way to the hardware store. Nobody is there yet, so he takes his key, opens the door, and walks inside. He closes the door behind him, walks toward the rear of the store, opens up the wood stove, punches the coals with the two thirds rebar leaning against it, then tosses in a handful of dried kindling splinters he picked up from a basket kept nearby. Split stove wood is stacked up against the rear wall, so he walks over, picks up an armload, and since the kindling is now caught, begins stacking the stove wood cross ways over the flame, closing the door of the stove.

He begins scooping seeds and filling up the large gallon sized jars by the cash register, as the fire inside the stove begins to crackle and pop. When he finishes measuring out the seeds and filling the containers for the day, he scoops ground coffee from the bag, and begins filling the pot. When the customers begin coming into the store, and the elders commence gathering around the wood stove, he will remove the ham slices, the mayonnaise, and the bread slices from the refrigerator, placing them into a saucer on a nearby coffee table. He begins sweeping the store in the meantime, so that the place will be tidy when the customers arrive.

The first potential customers arriving onto the scene are the elders. There is Poncho who walks in first, then comes Comanche, Jivus, and Manly. They are always first to arrive inside the store. The others will saunter in later on closer toward lunch time. To most it would appear these elders

are simply loitering, but they pay for their keep in ham sandwiches, coffee, chewing tobacco, cigars, and cigarettes alone. Eventually all of them will wind up purchasing seeds, fertilizer, field-lime, and vegetable poison.

Mr. Bryant sells tough to locate heirloom fruit trees and berry bushes, during their proper seasons. He also specializes in otherwise difficult to locate large brimmed outdoor hats, work clothes, brogan boots, steel game traps and fancy Have-a-Heart box traps. No heritage elder in all of Powell County could live without maintaining a healthy supply of these. He even sells less expensive, shop made wooden box traps for the young boys learning how to live off the land.

Eric is making his living waiting on customers and servicing the store. It is always interesting taking a break, sitting down with the elders, and chatting for a while. Comanche may have been most interesting to speak with. He leans in close to Eric, who smiles as he awaits his forthcoming words.

“Yeah boy, I slew a nice one last night. I heard something a stirring out not fur from my porch in the dark. I picked up my handheld spotlight. You know I cut some cardboard and duct taped it over the edge of the light to form a shade to hide behind. I snapped the light on, and there he was. He had to have been maybe an eight point when he had horns. He must have weighed in at every bit of two hundred pounds.

“Well, I put him down with my downloaded twenty five twenty single-shot. It's the best darn gun they ever made, I feel. The shot must have been the easiest one I had ever taken, and I’ve taken many in my life, son. Let me tell ya.”

“Who helped ya take him inside?,” Eric asks.

“Nobody, I drug him over to my old hen house, the one I use for a storage shed now. I hung him up and skinned him. It was a struggle to get him there, for sure, but I managed.”

“I’m surprised nobody anywhere heard the shot,” Eric chuckles.

“That gun is as quiet as a canebrake rattler on the prowl. That buck melted into a heap, with nobody being the wiser. That’s how I like ‘em, and those are the kinds of people I enjoy being around, nothing short of winners par excellent,” the old man laughs.

The old man continues smiling and talking as he digs into a tobacco pouch for more plug. The pungent odor of fermented, bourbon soaked golden leaf fills the air around the wood stove.

“It's getting tough to find people who know how to do that, this day and time,” Eric speaks up saying.”Most want to whine and cry when the stores fall short on meat and supplies.”

“I don’t know what this world is coming to, son. I simply don’t know. I think the big crash is coming. I’ve thought that since ‘83. This garbage these people are talking about now is a heap of lies. I’m telling you, a starving time is coming to America.”

Eric keeps his mind occupied by going an extra mile assisting his customers. There is no use worrying about home or his family. He knows his children would be well taken care of at the home of his in-laws. His wife is gone now, but maybe that is best. On the inside he holds a sense of urgency and duty for strange reasons he simply can’t explain, but he remains calm and relaxed to the best of his ability. When his day concludes at sixteen hundred, he sweeps up the store and stacks his final bag of dog food for the day.

“Well Mr. Bryant, I’m headed out for the day I suppose, unless you need a security guard for the night.”

“No, not tonight,” the humble, somewhat quiet man says in reply, “but look, son, if you need anything I am here to help. I am aware of the situation fate has thrust you into.”

“Thank you, Mr. Bryant,” Eric says as his head sags,” I’m OK for the time being, I think.”

He mops the floor, leaning the mop in the corner by the front door. Outside he can hear the chanting protesters. Sadly, their whines and cries are becoming part of the daily menagerie. He is feeling himself becoming numb in recent days. He grabs his backpack, stepping out the front door, and closing it behind him as he did so. He takes a deep breath as he commences the long walk, now from the back side of town, to the summit of Green Man Peaks.

According to local legend, a muscular, tall, green man once stepped down from the peaks. When locals confronted him, he claimed he originated from a mysterious sunless land, with a dark purple sky, rivers shaded by tangerine trees, rocking horse people, and having glass eyes. He claimed he arrived on the mountain by crossing a bridge by a fountain, with kaleidoscopic cellophane flowers on either side.

Nobody knew what to make of anything, then or now. Aunt Sadie Mae saw him, giving a personal account. Cousin Gloria Bizell laid eyes on him, and spoke with him. She adamantly confirmed all reality in this claim. *He spoke perfect English, but with a strange accent!,* she always said. Bo Pop Rankin claimed he spoke with him, and thought he might have held a slight middle English accent in his voice, but wasn't a hundred percent sure. Bo Pop read lots of books, so he would have been aware of what he was claiming. He also served in the navy during the last big war.

Problem was, for him to make it there he must walk in the direction of the Market House, beside Liberty Park, then step in between buildings across the road from the Market House, directly into the woods. Off in the distance two twin mountains stand, and on the other side of the peak was where the catacomb entrance is. Most folks, even locals, didn't even know about the catacomb here, since the entrance is out of the way and very inconspicuous. He begins

walking in the same direction of the protesters this time, rather than against them as he usually did.

"Hey Moth-Daddy, you lost something round here, man?"

Eric turns to see the big ogre, the woman called Crud. He can almost smell the son of a bitch to the point he didn't need to turn around.

"What's with you, man? Are you deaf, and dumb as a block?," the man says.

A sasquatch monster of a woman, maybe six foot five and four hundred pounds, suddenly spins around, stepping out of line directly in front of him, blocking his way as he walks. She must have been the absolutely filthiest, disgusting subhuman scum he ever laid eyes on. He is utterly breathless in complete disbelief at what his eyes beheld.

Her arms are muscled like a very well toned male/s. Even though the evening air is slightly chilly, she wears a tank top and faded ragged blue jean cutoff shorts she can barely fit into. She is literally covered with tattoos from head to toe; of demons, ghosts, strange X marks, eyes, male sex organs, and more. Both ears must have seven thick rings in them, as does her deep purple lips. Her face is tattooed with wind-like swirls. Even her tongue has three of what appears to be pearl tipped rings through it. Her breasts appear as two monster melons reaching out from the rest of her body as she stands firm with both hands upon her hips. Her head, with its purple, blue, pink, and green colored hair, is cocked to the left side in an intimidating manner.

"Are you deaf or something? What's up with you Mouth-Daddy? You walk like a dragzilla. We see you all over TV, ole Dead Cherry. I mean, you're a hell of a star around here, man!"

She squints her eyes, turning back toward the line of protesters, laughing.

“Let's hold him and strip this block down right here, for the whole world to see that little stem of root he must have!,” another hoarse female voice yells, as several more laugh to a point of hysteria, Eric thought.

His heart races as he ponders what his next move will be.

“I got another idea,” yells a shrill female voice from farther back in the line. “Why don’t all of us strip this block down, bend him over, and let Sally Serpent back there have at him good from behind. I’m sure it's been a while for her.”

Eric glances around for an opening to zip through. The sasquatch monster steps forward, to a point she is directly upon him. Her disgusting lack of hygiene is almost unbearable. She smiles a yellow toothed grin stained from excessive cigarette smoking, glancing over toward the others standing in the line.

“I think this block looks like an egg to me, my fine ladies and sack-room she-males.”

The monster faces the line of protesters to her left as she speaks, walking up very close to where Eric is standing, then suddenly snaps back around, slapping him across the side of his head with her massive breasts, knocking him flat on his back.

Suddenly a roar of laughter exudes from the line of protesters. Two of these women move towards his head as he lay, while two more move toward his feet. Obviously something negative is in their minds.

Eric rolls to the left in a nick of time, leaping to his feet, racing in between the buildings across the street.. He doesn’t stop until he makes it into good cover in the woods. As he pauses in the vegetative cover catching his breath, it sounds as if the entire line of protesters explodes into laughter.

He walks through the dense vegetative cover for thirty minutes toward the twin peaks. He

knows he must make it to the peak on his right hand side. This one appears at its height to have a snow cap, which it sometimes does, although this time of year it is more than likely fog. Eric knows it may be cold up there, and the air already has a thick chill hanging in it. He is happy he thought to pack an army surplus jacket into his bag.

An hour away from town he begins to trudge up the inclining landform before him. He can hear the sound of wind howling high up, but not much is blowing on him at the moment. About halfway up the mountain the trees and vegetation thin. A cluster of boulders seems to surround the mountain at this point. He knows almost instinctively the veiled entrance to the catacomb is nearby.

As he searches the boulder cluster, he can perceive distant whispering chants riding on the wind, seemingly from a covert group. He can sense a presence. He turns to his right, spotting a rugged inflexible male face inside a forest green cloak and hood. It gazes directly toward him in the waning sunlight. While he stands mesmerized, the figure suddenly fragments, then fades away. Was he dreaming? Has he lost his sanity?

There is a certain large, nearly flattened boulder jutting slightly outward toward him. Behind this is where the catacomb entrance elbows to the left, then meanders deeply into the mountain. He saunters inside, clicking on his flashlight. He can see the scorched birch handles of torches somebody once carried down. They didn't appear recent, and could have originated from any time period. Once he found some harking backward into distant native times, judging from the broken pottery and stone knives laying scattered around. Old time moonshiners also frequently ventured into such locations.

The chanting seemingly echoes throughout the entire mountain. Now it seems much louder, to his surprise. Every now and then he can perceive actual English words being spoken, such as

blood, harvest, death, season, and war. The chanting seems so real, yet holds a chilling paranormal element to it he simply can not explain. Finally he rounds a corner after walking for what feels like an hour, ambling into his chamber. His supplies are still there safe and sound.

When he finally drifts off to sleep, he feels as if he is entering another realm. He sees himself in the woods, then high on a mountain top overlooking the town of McKinney. He perceives the howl of distant wind, yet feels none. Beside him stands a figure in a jet black cloak and hood. The hardened face has bluish green flesh. The eyes are a pale yellow tint. Its hands are nearly scheletized. It turns, glaring into his face, then raises its right hand, pointing its index finger toward the town. Then he lowers it.

"I don't understand," he tells the figure as he trembles with fear.

He can see the protesters setting fire to the Market House and destroying the hallowed effigies in Liberty Park. The figure turns toward him again, raising his right hand toward the town. Now the protesters are attacking the churches and the worshipers while they pray. They storm toward the hardware stores, including Mr. Bryant's, viciously attacking the owners, including Mr. Bryant, the customers, and especially the elders. Groups of them who appear exactly as the two, Crud and Sow, in form and dress, begin hitting, kicking, and stomping all of these innocent county residents, including women and children.

The hooded figure turns toward him again, but this time blood is dripping from his face and hands, from what appears to be deep slashes across his forehead. A smile seems to break his hardened face when he turns back around to face the town. He raises his right index finger. A white stallion suddenly rides into town from somewhere deep inside the hills. This stallion carries a powerful rider of a large statue, wearing a golden diadem and red cape, swinging a

flaming double edged sword. The rider has no face, however, and when he enters the town, the protesters flee in absolute terror, into every direction.

Suddenly he awakes. A slight ray of morning sunlight beams through an air vent high up in the mountain, cutting completely through the darkness inside his cavern. He arises from his bed pallet, placing on his jeans, brogans, western shirt, and army coat, picks up his backpack then heads out into the cavern. He doesn't need a clock. He instinctively knows it must be around 0600. He nearly dreads walking past those protesters.

In a brisk two hours walking time, he finds himself moving between the buildings, and stepping out onto the street between himself and the Market House. Thankfully, there were no protesters, only an empty street. When he walks to his right on the sidewalk, past the Market house and the park, he can see piles of trash left by the protesters. The disgusting sight almost makes him sick to his stomach. Soon he makes a left turn, walking down Main Street in the direction of the hardware store.

It must be 0800 he thinks as he unlocks the wooden double doors. He pulls back the screen door, steps inside, then shuts the door behind him. He begins stacking hundred pound bags of chicken mash and dog food, as he fills up the seed containers by the cash register at the front of the store. He loads up the coffee pot near the wood stove, then punches the *on* button. He begins filling up styrofoam coffee cups with individual cigarettes and cigars, as he fills the gourmet chewing tobacco container, near the manual cash register in the rear of the store. He hopes to have the store swept up at least one good time before people begin entering inside.

Soon the elders commence walking in, taking their seats around the wood-stove. The customers begin arriving, one behind the other. Eric busies himself searching for customer requested merchandise, and stacking bags of dog and chicken feed up against the wall for ease of

handling and inventory. Every now and again he pauses, speaking with a customer or taking a seat around the wood-stove. Comanche requests a sample of the latest South Carolina Plantation gourmet bourbon and vanilla flavored chew. While he retrieves a sample, Eric glances down at a pocket watch he often carried. It was twelve o'clock sharp.

"Haints are popping up ever-where, boy. Almost ever-body in city hall is reporting them, especially these big city furriners. Us local folks for the most part, haven't noticed many."

"What ya mean, Comanche? What kind of spooks?," Eric asks with raw eagerness in his voice.

"Shadow people inside their houses, angry faces being seen in their mirrors, possessed dolls coming to life, stuff moving around all over the place by itself, weird voices being heard inside these people's homes, and so on."

"What ya make of it?," Eric asks him.

Comanche leaned in closer toward him.

"Something is up, I tell you. The spirit cults are conjuring these things up from deep down inside the hill catacombs, to terrorize their enemies. Out-landers pose the greatest threat, but those backing this garbage going all around these days are the greatest threats of all."

"What makes them most angry of all?," Eric asks.

"These sons of bitches down in City Hall are talking about forcing all homeowners, whether he's paid his home off or not, to take out a loan that virtually amounts to another mortgage. This loan is to finance a series of upgrades to make the home reduce carbon waste and be in tune with the environment. If he refuses to do this, then City Hall will take out a lean on his property. If he doesn't make payments on these loans, then they confiscate his property."

"There are going to be lots of pissed off people around here in this neck of the woods," Eric says with a chuckle.

“The assistant to the county manager..,what's her name? That great big loud mouthed ape lookin’ slut with the damn nappy hair you always see on TV. You know the one I am speaking of. I can’t remember her name, son, but she found a crossbow bolt made to look like the flag with the coiled rattlesnake that says *don’t tread on me*, stuck in the front door of her house. City Hall acted fast on that one, and ole Forest Griffin, that crackerjack detective downtown, is already on it. Ole Doyal Holzemen is with the Anti-FaTa. He’s on a march because of this, declaring he’s gonna find out who did such a thing, and he’s gonna put a stop to it with his group.”

Eric gazes outward toward the door of the hardware store, not making a direct reply. Time passes by quickly that day. It is already four when he glances back down at his pocket watch. He begins stacking more bags and sweeping the floor. He tells Mr. Bryant and the others goodbye. He knows he has quite a walk back to his mountain hideaway.

He ambles back out toward Mainstreet. Luckily all was quiet and no people, protesters or otherwise, are outside on the street, at least not on this side of town. He makes it over to the Market House, crosses the street, then steps between the buildings. He sighs, feeling good about life and himself in general. When he makes it halfway, three monstrous subhuman figures stand in front of him. Two out of the three hold sections of carbon pipe. When he glances behind, three more lumber up. Two were Crud and Sow, who both hold sections of pipe.

“We’ve been watching you, Moth-man,” says Crud. “ A load of shite has been flowing round here. All the blocks round here are leading us to believe they want trouble. We think you’re in wid ‘em.”

“I’m not in with anybody,” Eric protests.

“Well you are definitely one of them blocks, and we’re gonna make an example out of you, because of it.”

Both groups begin moving closer, from ahead and behind.

“Example? What a ya mean by that?,” Eric asks.

“Come on boys. Let's break him up into pieces right here on this street. That’ll teach the rest of ‘em.”

The group of six continues to close in on Eric inside this alleyway between the building.

“Don’t come any closer to me!,” Eric screams as he unzips his pack, taking his fifteen shot Ruger Security Nine out. This weapon is an immaculate, very compact 1911 model, fifteen shot nine millimeter. Carefully he eases it into his left hip pocket. The group keeps closing in.

“Moth-man, what ya gonna do, besides get mucked up on this good evening?,” Crud says to him while waving both upturned palms out from his body.

Eric whips the pistol out of his hip pocket, opening fire and dropping the three walking toward him from the front. The three behind him, where Crud and Sow are part, suddenly rush him with the two pipe sections held high. Eric turns toward his left, shooting and killing all three. The entire ordeal was over in mere seconds that felt like hours. Almost instinctively he knows he must vacate the area immediately.

Since he feels he is already being pursued, he thinks to pause near a dogwood tree as he is walking past the Market House, spraying the bottoms of both shoes with scent eraser purchased at a local Walmart, in the hunting section. His personal favorite is *Scent Away*. He often hunts sitting on the ground, and deer walk directly up on him with this. Since the nine millimeter rounds were down loaded into subsonic status, more than likely nobody heard the shots, he

reasons. Once he is in decent wood cover, he takes off running away from the crime scene as quickly as possible.

Chapter 9

The Pale Phantom

A lone shopkeeper makes his way toward the Market House, as the light behind a rolling treeline brightens. From the Market House he can see where trash from protesters covering Liberty Park the day before, was now gone. The painted obscenities were removed from the hallowed effigies, although discussion abounds as to what a next move in regard to the matter might manifest as. He stands underneath the southern archway at the Market House complex,

gazing out across the street toward the alleyway between storefront buildings on Freedom Boulevard. Something out of place suddenly catches his eye there in the narrow alley.

The shopkeeper walks from the Market House, across the road, down through the alley, past the blood drenched sight assaulting his eyes, as a pungent scent of freshly spilled plasma fills his nostrils. Ghastly tattoo covered bodies lay sprawled out in a bloody, twisted heap, on a somewhat narrow brick and cobblestone walkway. He can sense from the tattoos and general appearances, these dead are more than likely protesters.

"I was afraid it would all come to this," he whispers underneath his breath as he rips his cell phone from his right hip pocket.

He phones the police station and the operator says several officers will address the matter immediately. Four officers arrive on the scene. There is one more mustachioed man in their company, donning a double breasted suit, tie, and black felt fedora hat, carefully observing the general scene and writing notes. Soon he approaches the horrified shopkeeper, speaking in a somewhat comforting tone of voice.

"My name is Forrest Griffin. I am head of the local state detective agency near City Hall. I want to know exactly what you saw when you called this in."

"I own the Heritage Hot Sauce store beside the alleyway there. This morning I parked on the other side of the Market House , walked up to the Market House, and as I stood underneath that southern archway there, something caught my eye here in the alley. When I walked over, this is what I saw," the shopkeeper said, waving his hands toward the scene..

"Did you hear anything?," Griffin asks the shopkeeper.

"Nothing, not a sound."

“Did you notice any sign of anybody around, or have a feeling of anybody possibly lurking nearby?,” Griffin asks.

“Nothing.”

More police arrive at the scene, blocking traffic and holding potential sight-seers at bay, while photographs are being taken and the general area assessed. The media is quick to move in, with reporters hastily stopping officers and questioning others. Popular local reporter, Tyson Walsky, is one of the most active. He approaches the rookie detective assisting Griffin.

“Has any determination of possibility yet been made?”

“Nothing has been determined as of yet sir,” replies the rookie. “ We’re in the assessment stage, and have no further comments in regard to the matter.”

“Do you feel this act of violence may have originated from traditionalist elements here in Powell County?,” Walsky asks Griffin.

“I don’t know, and wrought speculation is not part of the conclusive process in our logic at this office,” the detective replied, “and furthermore, I have no more comments.”

Griffin slowly walks over the general crime scene. It is obvious these six had pinned somebody up against a wall, more or less. At least four out of the six, had four and five feet long sections of schedule twenty carbon pipes in their hands, obviously intended for use as weapons. All six, including the female, were very muscular, with four out of the six being hulking and muscular.

These bodies are covered by tattoos from head to feet. Many of these tattoos are of the sickle and hammer, or have the American flag printed with the sickle and hammer positioned in the center. There are also statements such as *Together We Are One*, and *One Labor, One Sustenance, One Nation*, written across the fronts of their T-shirts. Griffin glances up toward the shopkeeper, and his own subordinate detectives accompanying him at the crime scene.

“Judging from the way these bodies have fallen, the individual doing the shooting must have been up against the wall over here,” Griffin announces, as he walks over into position, pausing in a stiff legged fashion. “The two on the far side were shot in the back between the shoulders, and in the back of the head. They must have been fleeing the scene, although flying bullets fired out of intense fear can miss and glance from brick walls such as these, sometimes appearing as shooting a target from behind. Fresh marks on the bricks indicate a possibility. The four up against the wall here must have gone down first. This is interesting. Four of the six were also carrying pipe sections. I wonder what was going on?”

“Surely it must have been an assault,” one of the officers replies as he walks about, surveying the crime scene. “The shooter must have been terrified. I know I would have been.”

Griffin turns his nose up toward the officer, then turns back toward the crime scene before them.

“Why hasn’t he called in, then?,” Griffin asks inquisitively. “If it was self defense a court of law could clear him.”

“I don’t know, good question,” the accompanying officer replies.

The officer picks up his cell phone and begins punching in numbers. He raises it to his ear.

Is the magistrate in?,” he asks. “Its officer, Garland,” he replies. “Has the magistrate received any calls from anyone claiming responsibility for a shooting over on Freedom Boulevard, McKenney here?”

There is an extended pause.

“O.K., thanks.”

He removes the phone from his ear, replacing it back into his shirt pocket. The officer glances around at Griffin from underneath his lowered eyebrows.

“So much for that effort.”

“Well, we are just beginning here,” Griffin tells the officers. “ I am going to take a few more pictures and make a decent sketch or two, then we’ll call in the medics and get this scene cleaned up before more stragglers stumble in on it. We absolutely must get this area cordoned off ASAP.”

One of the officers hurriedly begins making phone calls.

As Griffin walks over the crime scene again, surveying the general area, he notices a card stuck between the bricks, with one end in the soil between them. He reaches down, picking it up. The card has a hard photograph of a middle aged male on it. The name on the card is Simon Hillburn. The title, *agent*, is printed in gold lettering across the top of the card.

“Has anyone ever heard of Simon Hillburn?,” Griffin asks.

“I have,” replied the shopkeeper.

“Who is he?,” Griffin asks.

“He’s a local ginseng harvester and grower. He’s a rough and wild one,” the shopkeeper replies.

“Could he have done such a thing as this?,” Griffin asks the shopkeeper.

“I doubt it. He seldom comes into town unless it’s to make a sale,” the shopkeeper continues.

“Could he know anything about this?,” Griffin asks.

“He might, all kinds of people interact with Hillburn. I don’t think he had anything to do with this, however.

“Where could I find him?,” Griffin asks.

“In the cabin by the gulch on Crazy Woman Creek, just outside of town here, on the western side.”

“I might pay him a visit today,” Griffin replies.

“Could you inform me anything about these dead here? Who might they have been?”

“Well, to be honest with you, they were some of these Communist protesters,” the shopkeeper replies. “I actually recognize a few from the marching going on in the park here.”

“Do you have any idea why things might have come to this, if we are not dealing with a self defense issue?,” Griffin asks.

“To be honest now, these protesters are often heckling and harassing shopkeepers. Police around here do absolutely nothing when the matter is reported. Nobody anywhere will take abuse forever. It was only a matter of time,” the shopkeeper says. “Besides this, judging from the scene here, with the pipe and all, more than simple heckling and harassment was going on here.”

“I don’t know. I want to ride over to this Hillburn man’s place. Could you show me where he lives? I have my personal vehicle right there by the street. You can hang out in the car, and it won’t take forever, I promise,” Griffin says.

“Sure,” replies the shopkeeper. “I could do that.”

Griffin walks around scribbling a few more notes and taking photographs. After fifteen minutes or so he asks the shopkeeper to take a ride with him. The two walk back out toward a car parked in front of the old dry goods store, now closed. As they drive along Griffin speaks with the shopkeeper.

“So how long have you been in business?,” he asks.

“Since I was twenty three,” the shopkeeper replies.

“How old are you now?,” Griffin asks.

“Forty six,” replies the shopkeeper.

“How do you feel about these protesters?,” Griffin asks him.

“Don’t have much use for them, personally,” replies the shopkeeper. “I believe in working for what I have. I’ve worked all my life, and tried to be a decent person for most of my life. I had my wild days, sowed my oats, so to speak, but it’s all behind me now.”

“Didn’t your parents help you get started? Was it they who owned the store building where you place your own goods for sale?,” Griffin asks him.

“Well yes,” the shopkeeper replies. “Everybody who is in business begins in a similar manner.”

“When you purchase goods for resale, on average, what do you pay?,” Griffin asks him.

“Well it depends. I sell basic hardware and locally crafted wall trinkets. I also sell hard candy and garden seeds. I try to cater to tourists and these mid-level retirees who keep on moving in here. I purchased a bag of candy on Amazon with two hundred pieces in it, for example. I get the merchant’s discount price, and pay only a dollar. I resale each piece for three cents a piece, sometimes a nickel around holidays and tourist seasons, when lots of outsiders are around. Doing this allows me to triple my investment money,” the shopkeeper says with a slight smile as he turns toward Griffin.

Griffin never smiles or glances over toward him as he continues to drive along.

“Everybody isn’t fortunate enough to have such options in life,” Griffin speaks in a near monotone. “Some people are simply struggling to put basic foods on the table, keep a shelter over their heads, and something to drive. Ninety percent of the employment base nationwide is only part time and temporary. When I say this, people always reply that so many are working online this day and time, but try to get one of these jobs. I have myself, for side work, and I am still trying. Besides that, enough simply doesn’t exist online to absorb all of these needy people.”

“Most of us business people have no problem with people getting a supplemental check, if it comes from the taxes we already pay in,” the shopkeeper replies. “All of us deserve our health care and retirement to come out of that. It doesn’t take forty two percent of everybody’s income to run the country. Some states are more than that. Ten percent in total will pay the nation's bills. I don’t care what nobody tries to tell me. What’s happening to the other thirty two percent, if we the people aren't receiving federal healthcare and retirement checks from it? Why don’t they have to prove where the money goes? Where are the citizen’s rights as individuals? My grandparents who fought in the Revolution, World Wars One and Two, didn’t risk their lives for a damn extortionist government imposing its authority like we now have. ”

Griffin never replies nor glances over as he drives along. A few minutes transpires.

“How much farther do we have to go before we arrive at this man’s place? I sure hope he’s home,” Griffin asks.

“Go up a ways and take a hard left. This should carry you right there in a jiff.”

When on this edge of town in this particular area, the scenery was gorgeous, Griffin always thought. A mountain gorge fell immediately off. A feeling existed of a person being able to view across miles of green or multicolored forest, depending on the seasons. A hazy blue smoke-like fog drifts near the distant sky-line on the other side of the gorge up against the mountain, which seems to reach into low hanging misty clouds.

Soon there is a narrow two rut road running toward a cabin sitting comfortably on the edge of this spectacular gorge. The cabin is almost a complete A frame, with a comfortable porch. One can easily discern that the cabin was constructed with the man’s bare hands. Living from ginseng must be simple to do, when one builds his own house from scratch and drives forty year old trucks and cars he, himself, keeps maintained.

“Is this cabin the one?,” Griffin asks.

Two older model pickup trucks are parked in front of the porch.

“I have a feeling he might be home,” Griffin says

“That’s the one, and there is his truck. Odds are good he is home,” replies the shopkeeper. Slowly Griffin pulls up, pausing beside the red truck. He steps out of the car and onto the porch, walking up toward the cabin door. He knocks solidly on the cabin door. No answer. He knocks solidly again. There are footsteps, then the cabin door opens slightly. A scraggly bearded face appears in a dirty T-shirt..

“I don’t know you. What do ya want?,” the man speaks through the narrow opening.

“My name is Forrest Griffin. I am the county crime investigator. I want to simply ask you a few questions, that’s all.

The door opens wide, and out steps a thin man in his late fifties, with a ragged brown beard and curly hair of the same nature. His swarthy face has a hard look of a man who has spent his life outdoors. He takes a deep breath.

“What do you wanna know?,” he asks.

“You are Simon Hillburn, right?,” asks Griffin.

“Yeah, I’m him,” the man spouts with a confused appearance on his face.

“We had a crime occur two nights ago in the back alley behind Freedom Boulevard, coming down from old Main. In Bryant’s Hardware Store, the alley locals call the broad area where these crimes occured Plotter’s Quarter, since the revolution against the British was formed there, so locals say. Your picture was found at the crime scene. You wouldn’t know anything about this would you?,” Griffin asks.

“What crime?,” Hillburn snaps.

“Murder?,” Griffin returned.

“I don’t know anything about it. Who was killed?,” Hillburn asks.

“Six people,” Griffin replies.

“What six?,” Hillburn asks.

“Six of these protesters you see around here,” Griffin responds, gazing deeply into the man’s eyes.

“I wouldn’t know anything about it,” the man says firmly as he shrugs his shoulders slightly..

“Are you surprised about these murders occurring in such a small town and surrounding county communitty?,” Griffin says to the man.

“Not really,”

“Why not?,” asks Griffin.

“People are tired of it.”

“Tired of what?,” Griffin firmly asks the man.

“These protesters are agitators. People are sick and tired of the harassment. Citizens are tired of having the will of these people imposed upon them by local zoning boards and government, manned by people alien to the area and its prevailing heritage culture. That murder would eventually come out of it, doesn’t shock me.”

“When was the last time you were in town?,” Griffin asks.

“Two weeks ago, maybe.”

“Did you walk down the back alley there in Plotters Quarter?,” Griffin asks.

“No, never do.”

Griffin shoves a weathered card before the man.

“Do you have any idea how this could have made it to the crime scene?,” Griffin asks.

The man looks the card over hard, then breaks a slight smile.

“Look, I am a businessman. I give my business cards out, for crying out loud here.”

“What do you deal-in?,” Griffin asks the man.

A hesitant, nervous appearance suddenly falls upon the man’s face.

“Well, a number of things?

“Like what kinds of things?,” Griffin asks firmly.

“I trade in automobile parts.”

“Anything else?,” Griffin asks bluntly

“Yeah, ammunition, powder, and lead.”

“Do you trade in arms?,” Griffin asks firmly.

“Occasionally,” the man spits out.

“May I see your FFL?,” Griffin asks.

“Look, I trade arms though a friend of mine who has his FFL. I bring him new customers, and we split the profits.”

“How’s business?,” Griffin asks.

“I don’t know anything about this crime, or any others. I’ve answered enough questions for today,” the man suddenly fires.

“I only have one more, and then I’ll be finished,” responds Griffin.

The man stands before him with a blank stare upon his face.

“Who is this friend of yours with the FFL, and where might I find him?”

“Bledsole, Jabson Bledsole. He spends his days around the wood stove in Bryant’s hardware store, drinking coffee and chewing tobacco. Otherwise he lives back in town on the old cotton

mill hill, over on McFarlan street, in the cook's cabin. Other than an occasional side hustle, he's retired now," Hillburn replies firmly to Griffin.

"I'll be going on my way now," Griffin says as he gazes out into the surrounding woods.

Hillburn steps back into the cabin, firmly closing the door behind him.

Griffin makes his way back to his parked car. The shopkeeper sits waiting patiently inside.

"Did you find anything," the shopkeeper asks.

"Plenty," Griffin announces. "You know a man named Jabson Bledsole?"

"Sure do," replies the shopkeeper. "He's basically a quiet person. He spends his days over in Bryant's hardware store by the wood stove. He does a little hustle here and there occasionally. His big things are ginseng and fossils dug up in Clay Hill. He trades it at half price, cash, on the pound. He also trades for the same value in commodities."

"What could he fetch for a person?," Griffin politely asks.

"Anything a man wants, from arms, to dope, to attractive women willing to provide whatever favors. Outside of arms and white lightning, everything else is done through a proxy, and very seldom these days."

"He's never been caught?," Griffin asks.

"He's only a petty trader who turns an occasional deal. He is also mostly a hands off middle man. He flies underneath the radar because he has no record. I honestly don't even think he has a speeding ticket."

"How old is he," Griffin asks.

"Maybe seventy."

“It's good that Bledsole hangs out over in Bryant’s hardware, because we are headed out that way anyhow,” Griffin smiles pleasantly. “I’ll let you back out at your store, or at the parking lot by the Market House.”

“Parking lot is fine by me.”

“Thanks for your help today,” Griffin says.

“No problem.”

The car of Griffin pauses before a closed shop the owner directed him to, and then the shopkeeper exits out.

“Glad I could help out. Call me if you need anything,” he says as he arises to step outside the opened car door.

When the door opens news reporters are all over the general scene of the Freedom Boulevard alley and Liberty Park. Protesters are on the march again, waving signs with the words, *Up with all and down with some, we shall find those responsible for the dirty deeds done,* written in large bold black letters. Several news reporters are racing all over the area, bounding back and forth from person to person. The most prevalent among them is none other than the locally famous, Tyson Walsky.

Walsky originally hailed from Golden Beach, California. In highschool he was part of the journalism staff and worked on the school newspaper. He always fantasized about living a life of adventure. When he was eighteen and graduated, he turned drifter, moving all over the country, eventually settling in Chicago, Illinois, where he worked on the Chicago Tribune for five years, before drifting into McKinney. Now he is settled, with a flourishing news and research assistant career.

According to Walsky, traditionalist attitudes are not conducive to positive social and economic transformations, which he publicly advocates through his associate platforms. He has been interviewed by numerous journals advocating progessive viewpoints and opinions. He is quick to point out traditionalist shortcomings, in society and behavior in general. Much of the recent countywide crime he attributes to disgruntled traditionalists. When he is not working, he spends his days in every town found throughout Powell County, hanging out at the court house foyers, in church parking lots and shopping centers, handing out pamphlets pointing out the shortcomings of capitalism and traditionalist thinking, while glorifying benefits of Marxist ideology.

Griffin backs up, then drives back down the street for two blocks, toward Bryant's hardware store. Slowly he turns into the street parking lot near the front of the store. Luckily there is a space open. He gets out and walks into the opened front door. The smell of animal feed and coated seed fills the air.

He walks past a medicine shelf for animals. A patron glances up cautiously as he grabs a large bottle of Horse Lineaments. According to a news statement in the local paper, a recent government mandate for buying health insurance, led to a great surge in people buying veterinary medicine in an act of non-compliance; since the mandate seeks to correct the response to the problem, rather than the motivation. Griffin trudges past the vet meds toward the wood stove in the rear of the store where a group of elders gathered, talking loudly over coffee and freshly made ham sandwiches. There might be seven of them. Griffin pauses before the group, who barely even notices him.

"What could we do fer ya, sir?," Mr. Bryant asks as he silently steps up behind him.

"I'm seeking a man named Simon Bledsole. You wouldn't happen to know who he is, would you?"

“Well I sure do,” Bryant says in reply. “He’s the man dressed in the faded suit and tie, knocking his pipe out on the edge of the wood stove door there. He’s easy to speak with. Hey Simon!,” Bryant yells as Bledsole glances up. “This man is here to see you.”

Bledsole smiles, then arises from his tied bottom wooden chair by the stove. He walks over toward the man, holding out his right hand.

“Glad to meet you, sir. What could I do fer ya?”

Griffin seizes his right hand, shaking it eagerly.

“My name is Forrest Griffin. I am chief of the local detectives in Powell County. Could we step just outside the door there and speak for a moment?”

Bledsole glances around, swallowing hard.

“Sure, why not?,” he says as he walks in the direction of the door.

Griffin follows. Bledsole steps over the door threshold onto the cinder block steps, and then the grass. It seems strange that grass would grow at this particular store front, since all the others were surrounded by sidewalk and asphalt. It gives the store a uniqueness all its own..

“Mr. Bledsole, I would like to speak with you in regard to a murder that happened in Plotter’s Quarter a couple of weeks or so ago. You wouldn’t know anything about it, would you?”

Bledsole pauses, then slowly parts his mouth to speak.

“I don’t know who did it,” Bledsole replies, “but we’ve seen problems around here. I can tell you that much.

“Problems? What kinds of problems?,” asks Griffin.

“With these Communist protesters. They harass the business owners up and down here, and the people going into the stores and coming back out. Somebody needs to do something. Who was it that died?”

“Well, it was seven of these protesters. Three were carrying four foot sections of schedule forty carbon water pipes. It was obvious somebody was hemmed into a corner, and fired,” Griffin replies. “I am working hard to find out who that somebody was.”

“Sounds like a self defense issue to me,” Bledsole says in reply.

“Well it was, Mr. Bledsole, but the least he could have done was call the police and report the incident. Why might you think he wouldn’t have?”

“People in Powell County don’t have any rights anymore,” replies Bledsole. “ These protesters and all of these outsiders come in here, and can seem to do whatever it is they want. If these sons of bitches hemmed a man up, and that man killed them, then what do I have to say about that?”

“What do you mean, Mr. Bledsole?”

“They go onto people’s land, a hootin’ and a hollerin’. They threaten people. They burn property. They have their pleasure in filling our children and grandchildren with their filthy beliefs and outright lies. Things have gone too fer, Mr Griffin. When are you going to do something about it?”

“Well, first things first, Mr. Bledsole,” Griffin chuckles. “ I need to find out who committed these murders. Do you have any idea who I might be able to speak with in regard to this matter?”

Bledsole pauses for a moment, gazing off into space, then takes a deep breath.

“A man comes in here, off and on. He is from Clan Alister. His name is Eric. He’s a good man down on his luck. He was the principal at the local high school. He taught our children right from wrong, and took pleasure in doing what is right. He taught our youth about our heroes, and our glorious past around here, and the constitution, and such. But them Communists had him fired from his job fer not teaching their lies and catering to their own degeneration, while they

cultivate destruction in our youth. His wife and family left him. He lost his house. Hell, he had a nice house here on the edge of town. He's a fine young man, I've known him fer years."

"Where could I find him now?," Griffin asks.

"I honestly don't know. He comes in here wearing a backpack. His family owned a farm down Main there, all the way across town. His own cottage was not too far from that farm. I honestly don't know if they took that, but I do know the media has been flocking there ever since they took his home."

"Was he in here two weeks ago?," Griffin asks.

"I think he was. I think they were protesting that day. I didn't see what happened to him, but I did see protesters harassing others. I didn't hear any shots fired, but others around here thought they did, from what I understand."

Griffin shoves a card in front of Bledsoe.

"Should he come back in here, have him call me. I need to ask him a few questions. When I see you again, let me know if you told him,"

He hands him the business card.

"I'll tell him when I see him," Bledsole replies, as he glances back down at the card.

"How old is this man, Eric Alister, do you guess?," asks Griffin

"Around thirty," Bledsoe replies.

He turns, stepping back into Bryant's Hardware. Bledsole walks back down through the store until he makes it inside where the circle sits by the wood stove.

"Well what in thunder was that all abou?t," asks an inquisitive Keith Sutton, owner of the Plantware, Soap, & Trinkets store, catering to tourists up a block or so. Often he visits Bryant's hardware store to socialize and gossip.

“A bunch of these protesters were murdered over on Plotter’s Quarter. He was asking me about it. I hadn’t heard nor did I know anything,” Bledsole replies.

“I don’t care a happy-damn what happens to any of them, personally. People are getting tired of their mess around here, and if a bunch of ‘em wind up dead, it doesn’t bother me any. They bought it on themselves,” Sutton says. “I wish all of ‘em would go the hell on somewhere.”

Bledsoe glances up briskly.

“Well they’re a lookin’, I tell ya. That Alister boy who was principal, you know, the one who sometimes comes in here, this detective seemed to have an interest in him.”

Sutton chuckles underneath his breath.

“He’ll struggle to meet up with that Alister boy, Simon. My gut is telling me ``*The Family* has him tucked away comfortably underneath their wing.”

The circle sitting around the wood stove suddenly silences, glancing around worriedly at one another for a few moments, then resumes casually speaking.

As Griffin enters back into his car, he wonders in the back of his mind if this Eric Alister is one of the people responsible for the kidnappings and the mail-bomb murders. He certainly has plenty of motivation for making a strike at those he perceives as being enemies. Doyal Holezmen would probably hunt him down and kill him at even a mere suggestion of possibility. He knows he’ll have to keep an eye on him.

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A magnificent Greek revival classical styled Baptist church stands on the north eastern side of McKinney, tucked away into a natural tract of rhododendron, black jack oak, and hickory. The

church itself dates back to the very founding of the town. Thomas Jefferson was said to have attended it during his travel there, along with George Washington, Fergusson, and the immediate family of old Dead Eye himself. The very pew where these famous persons sat has a brass memorial placard stenciled in on the backside of the seat near the bottom. When one walks through the two heavy wooden double doors at the entrance, his eyes fall upon the crystal candle holders along both walls and the three crystal chandeliers hanging on golden chains in the congregation room, as an intensity found in an overwhelming sensation of humbling timelessness, simply cannot be ignored.

Behind the church is a sloping hill. While shielded in perfect cover from below, Eric Alister takes his seat, commanding a full view of the old church and the surrounding grounds. He dearly missed attending services, since he used to go there virtually every Sunday with his dear wife and family. Somehow on the inside he knows what he lost may never be regained. He sighs at the sudden thought flashing through his mind. From this perfectly safe point, he can clearly hear the entire service, and command a full view of the congregation when it exits the church building.

As he watches the people enter, and he hears the preacher readying the quire, he removes a freshly made pan biscuit from his nap sack, stuffed with a fat slice of sugar cured ham. He pours himself a styrofoam cup of coffee from a dollar store thermos he purchased for storage and daily transport a while back. The good stainless thermos, he left back at his cave hideaway.

He did well laying up supplies for himself, he thought to himself as he enjoys his meal, the wooded surrounding, and his anticipation of the forthcoming sermon. It had been a while now since his last one. He shrugs his left shoulder as he slings the Mini Forteen he carried, back around behind himself on his shoulder before taking another bite from his biscuit and ham sandwich. Soon the preacher commences.

“Good morning my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ on this early spring Sunday,” the preacher says. “It's so good for us to gather here this break of day. Today is fitting for the title of this sermon, *Embrace the new Life!* We may all agree here, when we honestly and humbly find our way in Christ, we unhesitatingly and involuntarily embrace the new life. Give the house a heavy Amen!”

The congregation unanimously replies Amen.

“Before we commence, my fellow ladies and gentlemen in Christ, let's sing a praise of hymn. Turn, if you will, inside the big coffee colored hymnal there dedicated in memory to Mr. Elton Johnson, a fine man, to page one fifty three, Amazing Grace. When I raise my right hand and give the proper motion, allow the singing to commence.”

Eric smiles broadly as he hears the singing commence. Something about that song truly did soothe a troubled soul. He hated how everything now arrived at the point it did. As the song continues, he hangs his head, praying to God Almighty that somehow his life would be restored into a new elegance. Only the good Lord can figure such complicated matters out, because he can’t, and nobody else will ever try on his behalf. When the song ends, the preacher commences again.

“My fellow brethren, much has been going on of late, eh? Many people are in great need of a new beginning and the love of Christ. Just pause and think about McKinney itself today, not to mention the county at large, let alone the entire world! Think about all the things that have been occurring for a moment.

“That reporter, Tyson Walsky, claimed aloud on local television the other night, that the hand of Satan is all around us. Can you imagine that? Even he could see it was the hand of Satan, he

who assists the godless among us in their protest of all that's good, harassment, and destruction. Evil spirits come down from the hills, into people's yards and homes, he said!

"Well, six men have died on our very streets inside the past three nights. Where is all of this riff-raff leading us to? Forrest Griffin, one of the best detectives in four counties, the Sherlock Holms of Powell County here, doesn't even know the answer to that question today. While the very best of mankind may indeed not know, I tell you today that God Almighty does!"

In the distance the sounds of protesters loom. A menacing crowd, judging from their sounds, seems to be growing. When the church congregation finally releases, the first family out is the Finn family, accompanied by four male friends in their mid twenties. One of the females is a young lady, maybe twenty one, named Adara. To Eric, she almost appears to be an angel sent from heaven, with her elegant developed body and her flaming crimson hair. Her sky blue eyes almost beamed from within her fair clear flawless complexion. Her ankle length soft blue dress, and her white sunbonnet accents the glory of her complexion and her hair, as she walks and moves about.

While he was married and caught up in life, he barely noticed her, but now she takes on a new demeanor since he was no longer married, far as he was concerned. He knows her brothers and her family in general. The Alisters and the Finns were on fine terms, and always have been. As the family casually walks down the steps, onto the concrete pad, a rustle is heard from around the opposite corner where some large leafed carnation bushes slightly veil one's view.

Seven hulking tattoo covered brutes, with orange, blue, and green hair cut GI style, wearing cut-off shirts and blue jeans with the knees worn out; suddenly lumber from around the corner when the family was far enough out that they couldn't rush back into the church building. Four

of the seven carry two inch by four feet sections of carbon pipe. The Finn family is tremendously startled. The males stand in front of the females.

“You people think you are something sitting in a building talking about people different from yourselves, don’t you? It's because of people like you that this violence has been going on. Well, it's going to stop, because now it's our turn.”

The four males weldking the pipe race up to the four accompanying the Finns. One of the brutes punches a guardian friend. Addara’s father, Absolum Finn, places one index finger across another.

“Get behind us Satan, go far from hense!,” he screams.

“Let's break ‘em up!,” one of the brutes with the pipe suddenly yells. “We’ll break up these pathetic men, then all of can rape these lusciously fine well dressed women. That red head with the plump tits looks so good right about now, I can taste her. Hell, I wish I could grow an acre of tits like hers just to lay down and wallow around in!”

He suddenly strikes one of the guardian males across the right hand knee with the carbon pipe, sending him crashing to the ground with a shattered leg in a single blow. The other brutes do the same with the three remaining guardians, sending them to the ground; while the first brute breaks the other leg of the downed guardian, then smashes his legs with the section of pipe, from the ankles all the way up to the thighs. The man screams in pain from his compound fractures, while the savage brute continues to beat him with the pipe section, as if in an absolute rage.

“We’re gonna break all of you into tiny pieces!,” a mutant purple haired beast-man screams in an inhuman harsh voice.

Addara screams as she cries in utter terror, reeling backward suddenly.

“Help somebody, help us all!,” she wails into the clear blue sky.

“May the hand of God Almighty deliver restitution!,” rages Absolum.

Suddenly rapid multiple, though slightly muffled shots ring out from the mountain beside the church. The suppressed sound ricocheting makes it difficult to determine from the ground exactly where the shots originate. The four pipe welding brutes suddenly melt into lifeless bloody heaps directly onto the earth. The other three turned to run, but more rapid fire shots saw them collapse face down, and motionless as if they were dropped down from the heavens above.

The Finn family gazes around in utter horror, toward the hillside from whence the shots appear to ring. While the women scream hysterically, the family races back up the stairway toward the inside sanctuary.

Chapter 10

The Search

The local news station WPCA (*Wonderful Powell County Area*), presents a well toned blond haired male figure standing in front of the First Baptist Church in McKinney. His expression is serious, and his voice tone is filled with incessant intent.

“Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, this is owner of Walsky news research, Tyson Walsky, with WPCA. Here we are at the site of another trajedy now transforming our general criminal scene into serial terror attacks. As you can see here from the blood pools and the covered bodies being picked up and carted away, this was an especially gruesome attack. It also seems that some worshipers were attacked, but we don’t know the full details, as of yet. None other than the

famed Forrest Griffin, once called the Sherlock Holms of Powell County and surrounding areas, is now on the scene. So some type of details shall certainly be revealed soon."

As he speaks Griffin is interviewing the Finn family. When he steps away, Walsky approaches him for an interview.

"Sir, I know you are busy, but could you pause for a moment here?"

"Sure, but you are right, I am busy."

"What have you discovered as of yet in regard to this crime?," Walsky asks.

"All that we know now is that some shots rang out from the hillside behind the church. As one can see from above, the helicopters are circling. We have trackers and bloodhounds patrolling the scene. I think in time we'll certainly hit pay dirt here."

"Do you feel this situation might be connected with the one over on Freedom Boulevard the other week?," Walsky asks.

"Certainly the possibility exists, and we are examining these carefully, but nothing is known with assurance at the moment," replies Griffin.

"Do you have any type of description in regard to who it is that might be responsible for all of this mayhem? There are no suspects or persons of interest in this case, or the one in town earlier? Am I right to say this, Mr. Griffin?

"There is no name the investigative department in Powell County cares to reveal to the public at this moment," Griffin replies. "We might conclude where, from all appearances and witness accounts, these slain in both cases were among the protesters."

"Thank you, Mr. Forrest Griffin, chief of the Powell County detective office and top assistant at the city crime research center."

“My pleasure,” Griffin smiles as he walks away. He meets again with the Finn family at the church stairway.

He approaches the lady in the family, of average height and medium build. Her radiant head of crimson compliments her clear, fair complexion, in the same manner as does her obvious daughters.

“What is your name, mam?,” Griffin asks.

“Sybil Finn, sir.”

“Are these your family?,” Griffin inquires.

“Yes, this is my husband, Absolum, and here is my daughter, Addara.”

“What do you do for a living, mam?,” Griffin asks.

“I work at Silverman Advertising on Garner Street as a human resources manager.”

“What does your husband do?,” Griffin asks.

“Silverman is one of three he agents for in a middleman capacity.”

“How do you feel in regard to these protesters and the events occurring around McKinney, and Powell County in general over the past year?,” Griffin inquires.

“Myself and my family don't have time to cry in the streets about statues, and an established nearly three hundred year old culture, where a majority of the people are content. There is no justification for bloodshed in any instance. However, in regard to this specific situation, there is another reality being overlooked here, sir.”

“Could you tell me again exactly what occurred here? I’m not clear on a few things,” Griffin asks, as he steadies his notepad and pen.

“Well, there is really nothing that is complicated in this story. We were walking down these stairs when the church services let out. There were three of us and four friends of my husband’s.

Out stepped these seven inhuman monstrosities from around the corner to the left. Four of them walked directly up to the four friends of my husbands. They roared who did we think we were sitting around in there putting them down, and then one of them punched the friend of my husband who stood on the left. The punch knocked him down.

"All four of these beasts carried pieces of metal pipe. One of them screams; lets break 'em up in pieces and rape the women! Then he points at my twenty one year old daughter there, saying that she looks particularly good to him. Then one of them smacks the next friend of my husband across the knee with the pipe, breaking his leg. Then they broke the legs of the other two. When the three men went down they broke their legs from the ankles to the thighs. Then they knocked their arms out at the elbows, breaking them up in pieces, from the wrists to the shoulders. My husband knew he was next, so he looked toward heaven, screaming for an avenging angel to deliver us."

"What occurred then?," Griffin asks.

"That's when a series of almost quiet shots rang out from somewhere on the hillside there. The strange thing is a person could not really tell where these shots originated from, except that they were from yon hillside."

"We've searched well, and found no sign," Griffin tells her. " No footprints, no spent shell casings, nothing. Our bloodhounds try to track, but never even pick up a scent trail. That in and of itself, is almost unheard of. It's almost like this person was an angel of some type, and simply fluttered his wings and flew away. Somebody knows how to move around and operate, is all that I have to say here. Do you know anybody who might have possessed such skills?"

Sibal paused in thought.

"No, not right off hand."

“Have you ever heard of Eric Alister, mam?,” Griffin asks.

“Yes, the entire family knows him. He is or was the principal at East Powell High.”

“Do you know anything about him as a person?,” Griffin inquires.

“He was a fine fellow. He helped my husband there out of several mechanical jams, and didn’t ask anything in return. He dropped by the house on holiday’s such as Easter and Christmas. He always gave really fine presents to my daughter, Addara, there. “

“Might he have been in possession of the skills needed to remain ahead of law enforcement in an outdoor setting?,” Griffin asks.

“Honestly sir, he hunts, we know that much, but everybody from our traditional population around here hunts. Everybody around here knows how to live off the land. I mean, come on, it's in our blood. It hasn’t been that long ago in the past, maybe since the early nineteen seventies, when Powell County didn’t have any corporate owned grocery stores. Locally owned stores only sold locally produced goods, and much of it was homespun. The rule everybody back then lived by was hunt, trap, fish, gather, scrounge, or die. The system hasn’t demonstrated its trustworthiness to us, so we don’t ever intend on forgetting our heritage past.”

“Thank you mam, for giving me that information. Should you ever need anything, then feel free to call the county investigative department or the city research center,”Griffin says to her.

On the way home, the Finn family never says a word, with thoughts of the day's traumatic events running vividly through their minds. The four friends are already in the local hospital. They have been stabilized, since all four will endure at least one hundred forty hours of surgery, probably over the course of the following two weeks, says the master surgeon. According to what Absolum was told over the phone, the surgeon claimed they would literally cut the arms and legs from the wrists, all the way back to the armpits, and the ankles all the way up to the

inside thighs. The flesh will be literally flayed from the very bones, like one does a large fish. These bone fragments will be stitched together with steel thread, with metal pins put inside his arms and legs for an indefinite stay. The ribs on two men will receive the same treatment, and one of the victims will receive a metal plate in his head in addition.

"What a horrendous travesty," Absolum gasps as he puts the phone down, falling backward into his car seat.

The family remains inside the car with him, eagerly wanting to know the health status of these three associate men. Absolum speaks to inform, but his mind is not focused on his words. In his mind he silently dreams of finding Eric Alister, if indeed he was his family's savior and his friend's avenger, then clandestinely delivering him some sort of thank you gift. He grits his teeth in hatred for protesters, their movement, and every message they speak. Their crass threats of violation toward his wife and daughter, were more than he could simply set aside.

Absolom seldom ever angers outwardly. He works with three very prominent local business people as a negotiation agent between individuals he knows well in the city planning department, and business enterprises owned by these three. He also is part owner of an independent church, and allows these three to utilize his autonomous church as a convenient tax hedge to pass their money through. In exchange, they grant him half of their savings while allowing him a low level position of ownership in their company. He invests the money, then drops it back into the church coffer once he has turned profit or has his business enterprise up and running.

He desperately would love to see his daughter, Adara, and his two sons, Chris and Jason, rise into status by running for office at the local level. All of his children hold management positions inside the business enterprises he agents for, as does his wife. The invading collectivists have already publicly chastised the First Baptist Church and the independent one he partly owns, for

not openly accepting gay members into their congregation, and publicly condemning any proposal for teaching evolution and fully promoting LGBT tolerance inside the Powell County public school system.

Several articles have been written about his opposing stance in state magazines and newspapers. Tyler Walsky also conducted two highly publicized interviews with him. He was fearful in secret, that indeed he might become a target for attack by people pushing degenerate agendas. Deep down Absolom feels these recent tragic events to be divinely ordained punitives, directed against what he views as an invasive, imposing, Satanic system of order.

Absolum, like many citizens of Powell County, owns a small land tract he tills and farms. When Sunday passes, with spring season and planting time approaching, he needs a few odds and ends from the local hardware store. Addara puts on her blue denim jeans and coat, then motors out to old man, Lazarus Bryant's Hardware store, up Liberty going toward Main Street. While her father selects lime, fertilizer, seed, and collard plants, she ambles over toward the wood stove, grabbing a tie bottom seat.

One elder, dressed in similar fashion as herself, wearing a large white Stetson cowboy hat, smiles broadly, noticeably glancing in her direction.

"My, it's not too often we see a young lady over here by the wood stove like this. What could we do for you?"

"Well," she suddenly sighs, "I wanted to speak."

"Help yourself, mam. Everybody calls me Comanche. I don't know everything, but I know some."

"My family was caught up in a huge mess yesterday," she proceeded to say. "It was all over the TV, news, and everything. I'm sure you and everybody heard."

“Maybe, but go ahead. Lots have been happening around here lately,” Comanche smiles as he speaks.

“I wish I could get up with a person named Eric Alister. My family knows him fairly well. We think he might have been our guardian angel yesterday,” she says to him in a low voice. “I feel I owe him a personal thank you, sir.”

“I’ll tell you what, young lady,” Comanche speaks in very similar low tones. “I’ll inform The Family today as soon as I leave here, and if he was the one, he’ll be at the old Shawnee grave mound over on Tomahawk Creek by this evening, out by Guardian’s Headpoint. You know where that is, I know, right?”

“I do,” she replies.

“Well, be out there alone, and keep your eyes toward the thicket. If he was the one, he'll meet you there.”

“Aren’t the police on the lookout, sir?,” she whispers.

“Not there. Much exists about how to move around in these hills that the police simply don’t know, lady. Just be there before dark tonight, if you want to know the truth about all of this.”

When her father collected all of his items, Addara assisted him in transporting this material to his car. Once inside her father’s car, she informs him of what Commanche told her. Her father never makes any reply. Around three oclock that evening he picks up a pack filled with several hundred boxes full of thirty-thirty rounds, and two of Sybal’s best briar berry pies.

“Let's move out,” he tells Addara. “Too bad we couldn’t bring ice cream with us.”

Both of them motor out toward the hydroelectric dam and lake locals named Gilded Lake. The narrow paved road circles the lake toward the side opposite the town. In the distance one can see a mountain with a somewhat rounded point. This place is called Guardian’s Headpoint. The two

park the car, walking from there toward the peak, with the pack in Abosolum's hand. They enter into the woods. After walking four hundred yards into rather thick woods, they arrive at a somewhat deep and wide creek.

"This is Tomahawk Creek," her father whispers. "You follow upstream a ways. You'll see the old grave mound on your right. Here, take this pack with you," he tells her as he shoves the pack forward." I'll wait for you right here."

"Something makes me nervous about doing this," she tells him.

"Keep going, you'll be alright," her father assures her.

Addara follows the creek upstream for two hundred yards or so. Soon the woods opened up a bit more. She looks away from the creek toward her right, and spots a surprisingly large mound, with pine logs long turned into lightwood, laying in a hexagon shape on its summit. Slowly she walks around the mound, toward the back side facing the deep woods. When she rounds the side, a man donning a black robe with a hood is standing there. She gasps in utter shock.

"Don't be afraid," the man whispers. "It's me, Eric," he whispers as he takes down his black hood.

"People are mentioning your name all over town."

"Am I that popular?," he asks her in a whispering voice.

"They say you have done so much stuff around here, have you?"

"Some of it, maybe, but not all of it," he curtly informs you.

"They say you kidnapped that Holzeman boy, and sent a bomb in to that college professor at Powell Central."

"I wasn't aware," he smiles as he tells her.

“They say you murdered those people in the alleyway on Freedom Boulavard,” she pauses as she glares at him after speaking.

“Don’t rightly recall anything of it,” he smiles as he speaks.

“Was it you who rescued my family, Eric?

He smiles broadly when she speaks to him with her question.

“I’ve known you and your family for years, Adara. Be thankful an angel heard your father’s plea for help.”

“Here, I have these gifts for you in my show of gratitude, “ Adara whispers. “Father says if you or any accomplices ever need accommodation or safe harbor, then please let us know,” she informs as she hands him the bag.

“Your gracious gifts are accepted,” he replies back to her.

Addara stands gazing upon him with hypnotic fascination. This man is so handsome, so daring, so valiant, and one her and Clan Finn once knew on a cheer-filled basis. *How did fate lead him here into such a tragic place?*, she asks herself in silence. “Such a lonely hunted soul,” she whispered underneath her breath. “Something simply isn’t fair about it.”

Eric opens the bag, observing the ammunition, and a Marine Corps K-bar side knife. He holds up a pie.

“This might be my favorite item yet. Did you make it Adara?”

“Maybe,” she bashfully giggles.

“It's getting dark now. Allow me to escort you downstream to where your father patiently awaits.”

As the two walk, Eric replaces his hood. Little is said. Eric makes virtually no sound when he walks. Addara feels this phenomenon is strange. When her father is in sight, noticing her, she

glances around and Eric is gone. She glances around but all she sees is darkness and the eeries shapes of trees. A steady hum of night bugs and chirping of frogs does little to assist in identifying vanished souls. She mysteriously feels an unseen presence, yet hears or sees nobody.

The downtown area appears full with police and protesters, all day and night long. A new anger, seemingly seethes from raging voices somehow invigorated with fresh energy. Several protesters toss bottles through a number of store front windows, attracting nothing in the way of majestial attention, other than a brisk mention by Tyler Walsky on the local news. Many others burn tires and furniture in the center of Main. Walsky's primary focus was always the murdered protesters, the ongoing criminal investigation, and recently the fact of Eric Alister being wanted for questioning. The protesters and their actions are only briefly mentioned.

When store owners step outside on Main Street with loaded rifles seeking to guard their property from possible damage, police immediately rush onto the scene, cuffing them for violating a new ordinance against brandishing firearms in public places, the first of its kind in Powell County. Cuffed store owners are then transported into the Powell County jail, awaiting prison sentences, since brandishing firearms is now a felony offense in Powell County. Local families are in an absolute rage down at City Hall, demanding to know how protesters received the right to damage people's property, and owners lost the right to defend what was theirs. When they push City Hall for compensation, City Hall refuses to take responsibility for private property, even when the insurance companies neglect to pay out, since so many similar claims are being filed simultaneously.

Tucked away inside a pleasant maple and birch stand, stands a two story Mid-Century Modern Styled home. This home provides a sanctuary retreat for the Walsky family, from the heated invigorated political climate found on the outside. Interestingly enough, it was only a mere four

miles in distance from Eric Alister's former home. The woods surrounding the home has acreage leading into deep mountain country beyond the hill in the backdrop. The Walskies were never much concerned with this detail, however.

Sunday morning blesses the Walskies with warm spring sunshine, and a beautiful menagerie of wild flowers, and tulips, all enveloped in delicate rose buds and full hydrangea blossoms of sapphire and lavender. On the outside of these beautiful flower patches, small trees with large deep green leaves produce profuse clusters of carnation-like pink and white flowers. The scent hanging in the air is one of wild wisteria and lemon. Heaven couldn't be much better, claim numerous long-time locals who live in the area.

Instead of attending church, the atheistic Walsky family heads outside toward their parked newfangled electric MGS5 Station Wagon, with every member excited about venturing into town, handing out pamphlets and brochures praising collectivist ideology, the benefits of nationalized submission to UN doctrinaire, and the new progressive era settling in upon the entire nation. One of his junior high school aged sons mentions that he has witnessed eerie shadow men moving around outside his window at night. He also informs the family of him hearing phantom voices commanding him to repent.

Tyson and his wife suddenly crumple onto the ground as they near the car. A crossbow bolt is seen protruding from both necks into the body, with green squares in the center, a picture of a coiled snake in the midst of these squares, and the words *Don't Tread On Me* written in bold letters across the top of these green squares. The female and the two male children are terrorfied out of their minds, gazing in horror toward the woods, then down upon their parents. They hysterically race back into the house.

Forest Griffin is one of the first persons on the crime scene. Deep down he is almost certain Eric Alister was responsible. This was Eric's Home territory, Eric was hiding and on the run. Alister knows he is being pursued. A student associate of Mordred, the murdered professor at Powell Central, and a personal friend of Doyal Holzmen, has now take over the employment place of Tyson Walsky.

Ben Garland, a nineteen year old head of a growing organization, the YACP or Young American Communist Party, presently accepts the position vacated by Tyson's death. Garland is young and enthusiastic in regard to promoting UN sponsored collectivist agenda. Garland was a straight A student in the university. He has also taken the position of researcher opened by Tyson's death. He is on a mission to make the public aware of developments in Powell County he considers negative. The face on the news screen presently is of a much younger male. Not only that, he is hosting his own news conference.

"Good evening, ladies and gentleman. After innumerable interviews and much discussion, I wish to bring a topic of increasing concern to the public, in regard to a very problematic and harmful organization among us. This organization is known as the KFR. KFR is short for Knights of the Freeborn Republic. From our detailed and organized research, allow me to bring you the specifics.

" Isolated fractions of the KFR developed very early on after traditionalist organizations opposing the dominant political agenda were banned from Powell County. This organization is made up of local heritage populations who meet in the darkness of night at secret locations called "Castles' celebrating the old cultist Scottish highlanders ceremonies and traditions. One symbol is the flaming cross of Cumulus, which is an X over a smaller O at the center. This symbolizes

two swords laid over a shield, which was an ancient call to arms for the Clans. It was also a sign of the old battle god.

"The ceremonial costume is to don dark blue or black hooded cloaks while wearing masks of the skull, signifying death to potential enemies. These hooded figures gather in a circle surrounding the flaming cross of Cumulus, with the grandmaster wearing an emerald cloak and hood, leading the ceremony. From a timeless book of divine appeal he makes the initiation first to the god, then toward his fellow men. Here the men swear an oath to the US Constitution, to uphold it and the organization, at the peril of their own lives.

"The men are divided into congregations called *The Foreign Corps*. This group consists of professionals such as teachers, college professors, postmasters, and physicians. The gathering ranges outward from the home base, spreading traditionalist gospels and ideologies. This cult also hands out its own pamphlets, brochures, and books. Possession of these materials being illegal, make them that much more attractive to potential members of the traditionalist demographic.

"While the Foreign Corp is out recruiting new members, the persons they recruit are referred to as *The Home Corp*. The Home Corp consists of tradesmen and business owners. Owners of firearm shops are especially desired. The job of this organization is to help incoming members establish and run new businesses, where ten percent goes back into the organization. A test was devised to investigate whether a person has a potential for being successful. People desiring to establish desk top publishing companies are coveted, since through these people pro-KBR literature may be disseminated. These people can also organize military operations. An additional intent is to form a third political party called the *Sons Of Liberty*, or the *SOL.* Many covertly refer to this potential organization as the *Sons Of Light.*

"Each Castle holds its own *legion*. The home guard is responsible for organizing the army. This military organization is largely asymmetrical in nature. The first order is that of the *Ghost Brigade*. This group consists of computer hackers and professionals who tap directly into government records throughout the county and beyond, cutting off utilities, deleting and distorting information, stealing money via the computer system, and injecting derogatory false claims in regard to specific individuals. The Ghost Brigade also carrys out ongoing research in bio-terrorism techniques, building flame producing balloons, and disease bomb dropping drones, while planning future attacks on entire collectivist strong holds and towns.

The Wild Cats roam the town and country, even operating outside Powell County, moving indiscriminately among populations, carrying out lone wolf attacks against individuals spreading collectivist ideology. Poisoned letters are often sent out to government officials making laws supporting UN and collectivist intentions. At times kidnappings are carried out. Bombs and booby traps are at times planted in various places where catch potential is highest.. A car bomb going off in town recently was attributed to them, as was a recent car bombing in Nashville.

"*The Calvary* consists of all members. This part of the military trains in VietCong battle tactics on a daily basis, and house to house combat techniques. Members learn how to construct clandestine living quarters, bunkers, weapons from scrap, booby traps, and to attack in hit and run fashion. They are also train in how to spot and create weakness in enemy positions.

" This group is potentially very dangerous. If you or anyone you know, personally know any members, please feel free to call the report in on the local police crime control hotline."

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Forest Griffin rides around town all day with the name, Eric Alister, reverberating through his mind. Over by Tubman's Grocery next to Liberty Park, he carefully notices several bunched up men seemingly around thirty years old, carrying backpacks. He slowly pulls in to observe. Most appear decently groomed, indicating they were more than likely not homeless, but a few bore the worn out weathered appearance of being displaced. Any one of these men could possibly be Eric Alister. What he needed presently was an up to date photograph or something more profound to go on.

Eventually he begins to tire of observing males approximately thirty years of age, wearing backpacks and benevolently milling about in the store parking lot, or loitering in the park. He starts his car back up, then pulls out, moving back uptown toward the library. In town stands a brick academy building dating back to the seventeen hundreds. This is the Powell County library now. Slowly he makes his way from the car through the double glass doors. He walks into the media center, toward the micro-fish section. An elder blond haired lady is taking care of the place. She is well kept, yet has an appearance of being worn for wear on her face.

"May I help you sir," she asks.

"I'm searching for anything relating to that Alister case," Griffin replies.

"I can help you with that. Lots of people are interested in that particular case. Many are reporters. Some are lawyers. Which one might you be, sir?

"I'm the county crime investigator," Griffin replies

"What crime did he commit?," the lady smiles as she asks.

"None, that I know anything of," Griffin replies.

"Was there a crime committed at all?," the concerned lady asks.

“There were six protesters murdered back on Freedom Boulavard,” Griffin glares as he replies. “Not to mention the recent murder of seven in front of The First Baptist Church in town here.”
“My, oh my,” the lady gasps as she covers her mouth with her right hand.

The newspaper article is enough for now. There is the story telling of Eric losing his employment, and speaking of the fallout generated. He reads carefully. The most important aspect of the article at the present time, is the photograph of Eric Alister plastered across the front page. He walks back up to the lady behind the micro-fish section.

“Could I have a copy of this front page here?”

“Sure sir, not a problem,” the lady replies. She walks over toward a scanner, punches a few buttons, then returns with the photocopy. “Glad I could help out. I wish you well in your search.”

Griffin heads out the door toward his parked Regal, with the photograph in his hand. As he slowly motors down Main Street, he carefully observes each male he passes carrying a backpack. None even come close to Alister’s appearance. Most are either obviously older or younger. He can’t help but head out toward Alister’s home on the opposite side of town. It seems like no time passed, and he was pausing by the curbside observing.

The comfortable appearing cottage house stands to the right hand side. Already people are living there, from all appearances. Odd, he thought to himself, considering it hadn’t been so long since Alister was evicted by the bank from his own home, for non-payment of the mortgage installments. Alister losing his employment for failure in submitting to the UN endorsed agenda was messed up, but his own job isn’t to transform the county political agenda. His job is to find whoever murdered those thirteen protesters. His gut is telling him possibly that Alister was nearby, maybe somewhere observing him from a veiled, distant woods-hedge or plateau; but why was his track or identification failing to be captured by all of the high-tech surveillance

equipment being employed in his pursuit? Bloodhounds are failing to pick up his scent trail. Explain that fact of reality, for crying out loud here!

As Griffin sits inside his car by the curb, he sees nobody. The general area appears void of people, save those occupying Alister's place. Alister is around here, he tells himself, somewhere between this area and Bryant's hardware downtown. Problem is, there are many vast areas of different possibilities from quasi-developed to down right craggy, cat-claw, bamboo thorn and brush covered wilderness, between these two points. No wonder the Federal Government found only a mere ten percent of the Cherokee and Shawnee in Powell County during the great westward death-march, who once called this place home. He sighs deeply as he sits inside his car, thinking to himself and carefully observing.

Chapter 11

The Reckoning

High in the sky above the hills the night moon is full. A normally golden hue mysteriously transforms into a heavy crimson tint, looming lower down and much larger than average. A misty sky blue fog eases outward from the hills, downward to cover developed areas of the county. Prophets long predicted such occurrences with astonishingly unerring mathematical precision.

An eerie cult-like hum is heard all throughout the night from almost anywhere in Powell County, but nowhere stronger than in McKinney. The hills seem to be alive with clandestine movement. With the raging protests, the car and tire burnings in the streets, gross chants ringing throughout the night from the protesters, screams from innocent citizens being attacked in their homes, the rat a tat tat of sporadic automatic rifle fire, and the piercing reverberating ring of rescue vehicles and police sirens; few but the most observant are ever aware that indeed, something much more ominous is developing.

Those dwelling on the outskirts of developed areas claim the hum transforms periodically into an irate whispering voice screaming; *leave out-lander, flee, blood, death!* The Riannon are witnessed with much more frequency, only the nature of their robes has transformed, being dark blue rather than charcoal black, and nearly translucent, according to reports. The faces of these Riannon are of a skull, and their eyes are flaming red. Homes of county leaders supporting the new rising order, protest leaders, public personalities, politicians, urban planners who are

advocating mandated destruction of traditional architecture, and school officials from the county Board of Education; awake to discover signs of an O with an X brushed in heavy blood-like red paint across the face of many carefully selected front doors. Police are far too busy to investigate, with all that is occurring throughout the county simultaneously.

Mysteriously, the local Rainbow Center in Mckinney catches on fire, following a car explosion on the street before it in the darkness of night. The night afterward, on an opposite side of the town, an abortion clinic disturbingly explodes into flame. Heritage locals claim county officials in league with the New Order intentionally committed these offenses, seeking to invite more attacks on those allied against it. A complete lack of witnesses and suspects generates an air of apprehension among protesters and county officials supporting their cause, fueling a rise in visibility, and an eagerness to expand their violence into individual home estates.

Two abortion doctors and an LGBT couple found laying in a back steet on the western edge of town, with twenty five caliber bullet holes in their foreheads, appears to shove the surging wave of protesters over the edge. Doyal Holzmen, in leadership alliance with the Anti-FaTa, publicly states on the local news channel, where a forthcoming response in kind is in the making.

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The sun showers its embracing golden rays over what is unfortunately becoming the valley of bleakness known as Mckinney. Today is homecoming at the First Baptist Church, complete with a dinner on the grounds. Every male child and adult receives a brand new suit, tie, and hat the day before, according to long standing custom. Every female child and adult receives an ankle length dress and matching hat, a new neck brooch, and wrist watch.

Mr. and Mrs. Berkshire, who were born and raised in Powell County, don their new attire for this special occasion, making their way from their quaint classical cottage style home on Main Street, toward their brand new EcoSport. Over the past seventy years a single homecoming was never missed, they often claim aloud. They recently voiced their critical opinions toward the prevailing political agenda, to a news interviewer for the Powell County Times.

"I think the entire ideology of these people is unchristian," Mr. Berkshire exclaimed to the reporter a few days back. "I mean, who do these people think they are, teaching their perverted lessons of degeneration and their gross historical distortions to our young?"

"It's an utter disgrace," stated Mrs. Berkshire with a sense of urgency in her voice. "Their new order makes me ashamed to call myself American. How dare this imbecile of a dung eating President we now have, to sell us out to the Chinese, the UN, or anybody else! Who does he think he is, telling our businesses we can't pump our own oil on our own lands, or sell our product? He doesn't have the right.

"Our fore-father's didn't fight the British, the Germans, and the Japs, for this type of government we now have, where individual people have no rights at all. This country is ours, and it isn't for sale, by God. I utterly can't believe what is happening! I believe in freeborn America!," she continues, "and in true America we live free or die, forever free!"

Doyal Holzman and three Anti-FaTa members load up into a ten year old Toyota Tercel. He drives while the three men accompanying him hold their Glock G48 models next to the ragged, logo tarnished T-shirts covering their soiled, grease stained stomachs. One of the riders picks out a large maggot from inside his navel, flinging it down onto the floorboard of the car. As the Berkshires make their way toward the wine colored EcoSport, the Toyota Tercel screeches to a stop in front of the house. Six shots suddenly ring out, causing the elderly couple to collapse into

a bloody heap, as Mr. Berkshire places his key into the passenger's door to open it for his wife to step inside. Following these shots, the car speeds away from the crime scene.

When church ends, on the opposite side of the county, four kids have taken their suits off, replacing them with T-shirts and denim overalls, and are playing war; pretending to be Ebaneezer Powell and Old Dead Eye, riding forward against ferocious degenerate mutant enemies, leading guerrilla troops into glorious victory. The open meadow where they play is directly beside the narrow two lane road, with their comfortable classical style bungalow home inside a green tree and flower sprinkled panorama backdrop a ways out.

The beat up Toyota Tercel speeds down the road, unbeknownst to the kids. The four suddenly race out onto the hard surface as they play. When the car rounds the curb, it smashes into the four, leaving them by the roadside like broken, blood drenched rag dolls laid to waste. The rusted out mufflers on the Toyota Tercel roar as the car speeds around a distant curb, and out of sight.

*****

Adara packs in another basket filled with pies, fresh beef roast, rice, collard greens, and warm home style cookies. Her father drives her back around the lake, parking beside the curb where Guardian's Headpoint emerges into view. She glances over toward her father.

"I'll go in alone."

"Are you sure?," her father asks with an air of concern in his voice.

"Comanche told you to bring me here, didn't he?"

"Yes," her father affirms.

"You wait for me here. I'll be alright."

Adara walks through the thick trimber toward the headpoint mountain for several hundred yards, carrying the food package. When she makes it to the gently tinkling creek, she follows the creek upstream to the right, until the timber and brush begin to thin. Suddenly as she moves along, the Shawnee grave mound emerges into view. There is nobody around, as far as she can see. *Are the spirits of the Shawnee still in this place?,* she nervously asks herself, as her stomach knots in anticipation of an unseen presence.

"Did you miss me?," speaks a muffled male voice from behind as she nears the grave mound.

Adara snaps around. There is Eric with his hood down, in his dark blue robe with the O and X patch on his left hand side.

"I always anticipate my meeting with you."

"I've been busy," Eric tells her.

"I can tell. It's all over the news."

Adara glares at the robe, amazed at the fact of it being virtually translucent, making the body of Eric totally veiled. At times, it is solid, almost as if Eric somehow controls this phenomenon.

"What's wrong?," he asks her.

"Your robe, it's wild!," she gasps.

"It's the latest technology. The Chief Priests have been working on this for some time now."

"The Chief Priests?," she asks with an air of inquisitiveness in her voice.

"It's a long story. I wouldn't expect anybody on the outside to understand," Eric smiles warmly as he speaks.

Her eyes soften and a thin smile stretches across her young face.

"I brought you a gift, Eric, look," she exclaims as she hands him a loaded shoulder bag.

“Wow, I can’t wait,” he gasps and smiles. “I can catch the scent hanging in the air before I even open this up. What is it, last year's figs, apples, and mulberry, all done up in a tasty homemade pastry?”

“Look and see,” she tells him.

He takes out a wrapped package, unwrapping it to have a peek.

“Yes”

He takes out another.

“Yes”

He takes out one more and covered plastic bowl.

“Yes, but what is this? Surprise, surprise!”

He gently tugs back the cover, revealing a bowl of fresh home-made banana pudding.

“Wow, I just don’t know what to say,” he gasps at Adara.

“Say nothing, it’s mine and my family’s pleasure.”

“How did you get here?,” he asks Adara.

“My father parked by the highway when the headpoint came into view.”

“Oh, I see,” Eric affirms.

“Our family has known yours for years. I can tell you, we all approve of what you’ve done, by refusing to give in to this tyranny. My mother’s workplace hasn’t forced her to sign yet, but she took a job with my father as an agent for the company owner, rather than as an HR specialist. An agent is independent, at least that is what father tells her.”

“Everybody must do what is right for themselves,” Eric informs her. “I did what I felt was right for me. Now I suppose I must live with the consequences.”

“Did you really murder all of those people, Eric?”

“What people?,” he asks her.

“The college professor at Powell Central, the people over at Freedom Boulevard a while back, and the people over at the First Baptist Church. Now they are claiming you murdered that reporter, Tyson Walsky, and some homosexual couple over on the intersection at Garfunkle and Hickman street.”

“Somebody thinks I get around, don’t they?,” Eric chuckles.

She walks over toward him as she speaks. He places both hands on the undersides of her forearms.

“The Rainbow Center blew up, Eric.”

He gazes into her eyes, saying nothing in return.

“One of the abortiion clinics blew up the other night, before that couple was murdered.”

A smile runs across his face as she speaks.

“Two abortion doctors were found down on the bank by the deep woods bend on Crazy Woman Creek, with their throats cut,” she continues on.

He makes no reply, only he continues to gaze.

“Thank you for the food,” he says.

“You saved myself and my family, Eric.”

He moves forward, deeply kissing her blood red ruby lips, resting upon such a delicate, clear, fair-complexioned female face. He brushes her flaming red hair to the side before pulling back, gazing deeply into her warm piercing ice-blue eyes.

She drops her head suddenly.

“Look, I must be on my way now,” she gasps as she hesitates to glance upward into his face.

“When you make it back out, Adara, you’ll not be alone. Two guardian angels shall escort you back to the place where your father patiently awaits.

*****

Lately night-time throughout Powell County has been frought with terror and destruction. Every traditionalist knew something drastic must be done. While murder, in and of itself. was bad enough, when people commence slaughtering elders and children, nothing short of a dead-set drastic response works to provide proper balance, in light of such a rude scale tip. Long time heritage citizens were sick and tired of it all, the protests, the culture battle in general, the property destruction, the bloody death. Something must be done, especially when law enforcement doesn’t fulfill its duty obligations, in lieu of foreign political agenda being imposed by the government on all levels.

On a stage with a large microphone over by the Market House, Doyal Holzmen addresses a huge gathering crowd of degenerate beast-like rogues covered in tattoos, ragged jeans, body piercings, and dyed hair of multi-hue, in a harsh, angry voice. At times it is difficult to distinguish between male and female, who all too often are hugged up with their own genre.

“My fellow comrades in this greatest of American movements. I stand here before you on this blustery night to say welcome to the dawning of a new proigressive era in Powell County, the state of Tennessee, and the American nation at large.”

A crowd of several thousand cheers and claps as he speaks.

“Remember, as you march through the streets of McKinney tonight, and onward throughout the county, and as some have already said, even furthermore beyond; the blood of our own twenty has already been shed. Let it be said that motivations born from our side, matter not, in

the name of our glorious UN sponsored, National Socialist collectivist agenda. While we stand fully across the line, on the left side, it is they who stand on the opposite side, in opposition to our precious agendas' warm embrace. It is they who are guilty of infraction, not us! Allow us, the *Sons of Progressive Liberty,* to move forward now, and give full restitution to this horrendous imbalance!"

As an enraged, chanting mob surges forward down Main Street, nine eerie Ford F150 pickup trucks painted in such a manner as to seem difficult to see in night light, almost silently move into position down several back streets branching off from Main. Maybe a hundred mysterious robed figures crouch in the corners near where these side streets meet Main. When these unwitting protesters march half way past, suddenly a series of muffled two-twenty three shots rapidly ring out from both sides of Main.

The mob surges toward the right hand side, tumbling to the hard surface like waves of falling water, then surges back toward the left hand side. Some claim more than a thousand protesters die, others claim even more, and some claim much less, the truth is tough to discern. The people responsible for firing these shots appear to simply melt away into the darkness. News media from all over the nation scrambles over Powell County, as does a nationwide law enforcement pursuit for those responsible. As of yet, not a single clue remains to reveal the truth.

*****

An instant response from the protestors is to attack any long standing residential structures found anywhere in Powell County. By the time morning arrives, many stately homes are aflame. The home of Clan Finn is no exception to this latest phenomenon. As the furnace roars and the

house is engulfed in rolling fire, Addara's father, Absolum, glaires with hard-set anger in his eyes, as his weeping wife buries her face in his white T-shirt.

"It breaks my heart to see one hundred seventy years of family history simply go up in smoke like this, my dearest Sybal and Adara. My family has fought some battles here over the years, but the one in our own time is certainly the most difficult, I feel. How could these disgusting mutant subhumans do this? What did we do to deserve this?"

His wife lifts her tear stained face from his T-shirt, gazing at the flames consuming the only home her family ever knew. There was nothing they could do to stop it, but to call the fire department. With so many fires occurring simultaneously throughout the town and province that night, by the time the fire truck makes it to the Finn place, only glowing embers on a charred skeleton of what the place once was, remains. If any structure was ever resurrected on that particular spot of earth, it would have to arise from the ground up.

"Where do we go from here, Absolum," asks his gasping wife.

"I'm thinking," he replies.

"Everywhere in America has been sold out, and is under attack, even on the northern border coming from so-called progressive militants in Canada, so I read," his wife sighs. "I wonder if these ruling elites haven't established a Fascist government here since 1935, fleeced billions off the backs of hard working citizens, when they pulled away the checks and balances so American corporations may offshore; and now they are planning to round up the population into concentration camps, then hand the land and its people over to the nations creditors."

"Well, we need a plan and we need one fast. We knew this day was coming, but not so quickly. Most people, those who remain alive in all of this, will flee into the deep mountain wilderness."

He glances down at his wife's face as he holds her.

" I want better for us, honey. My cousin, Jimbo, was an unusual one in the Finn clan. He was a true born adventurer. He's lived in Greenland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and now he's on another exotic island somewhere. I forget which one, but I'm going to find out."

"I already know the two boys will rebuild," his wife says. "Adara is much more adventurous. We'll not need to worry much about her.

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The sounds of men shouting, hounds yelping, semi and fully automatic guns firing, fills the mountain forests throughout Powell County, not to mention the developed areas. Adara, fearing for Eric's safety, races out on her own against her parent's wishes, back down to the Indian burial mound seeking to meet up with him. When he finally appears, he carries her deep down into the catacombs, where few men know to tread. Adara is amazed at the virtual subterranean society constructed underground. There are gardens veiled from above underneath stony overhangs, growing asparagus, rhubarb, turnips, and numerous other vegetables. Still the plants somehow manage to receive enough sunlight and rain.

"The military has this County and three others placed under martial law. No person may enter or exit town, under pain of death," she tells him. "The area of Rakeshin, and beyond, is not barricaded, however.

"I hear the yelling and the shooting in the distance. I knew things were bad back inside the towns," Eric calmly tells her in reply.

"According to the news, you are public enemy number one. The G-men are out by the hundreds, Eric, bounty hunters included. You have a million dollar bounty on your head. There

was a huge street shooting the other night. Some claim more than a thousand people died. I don't know how they connect your name to it."

All around her she can sense an unseen presence. She doesn't know whether it is a mortal presence or an immortal one. There are sounds of chanting and prayer like songs sung in a language she simply cannot comprehend. When the couple rounds a corner in the distance, they enter a massive subterranean chasm. The stone is worn away into huge natural columns, spaced perfectly and all in a row. These columns almost bear a Doric appearance.

Inside the center of this vast chasm stands thousands of darkly robed hooded figures, with heads bowing and their raised opened palms toward a large flaming oaken figure of an O with an X through it. On either side of the X and O stands a green banner bearing the sign of a coiled rattlesnake, and the large bold words *Don't Tread on Me* written across the top. All around the group stands hooded figures robed in green, with their heads bowed and their open palms facing the masses.

Though Adara was terrified, she forces herself to calmly observe the procession standing before her.

"These are the mighty *knights of the Freeborn Republic,* the timeless guardians of Powell County, sons and daughters of Ebaneezer, Forest, and Quantrel. Their black robes are a sign they are in an observation or scouting mode. Dark blue is a sign of war. The fact that their faces are of the skull, is a sign of death to an invading enemy.

"Those surrounding the mass donning the robe of emerald, are the chief priests. They are summoning the forces of darkness to attack the occupying enemy. These gloomy fiends move across the land, into the yards and homes of targeted ones, causing mischief, sickness, and giving reports of the general scene back to the High Priest."

“Was it they who killed all of those protesters the other night?,” asks Adara.

Eric smiles slightly, turning away to face the gathering, then he turns back around, facing Adara.

“Misfortune falls upon those who seek to destroy tradition. Things have always been that way, Adara, and this time is no different.”

The two walk from the chasm back into the catacomb complex. Ahead is a stairway up the stone wall, leading back out onto the surface. The two walk up the staircase, exiting through a cave at the summit of a high mountain. A huge garden meadow is shielded from sight above by a stony overhang. To the left on a distant horizon, she can see a settlement in the fog below. To the right, she can see another somewhat larger settlement.

“There is enough food here to feed hundreds. Asparagus, carrots, beets, rhubarb, and turnips will go far,” Eric informs her. “To your left lies the settlement of Bogey Branch. To your right lies the settlement of McKenney.

A cell phone suddenly rings. Adara reaches into her purse.

“Hello?”

“I don’t know where you are, but this is serious business. The military is storming over everything around here. People are saying the angel of death will soon come,” says the voice of her father. “When the bounty hunter and police find Eric, I fear it's all over.”

“What can we do, father?,” Adara asks

“We must all get out of here. I have no reason to remain anyway. Those pigs have burned our house down. Your brothers may remain here and rebuild. I called up your Uncle Jimbo last night. I found out he was living out his life on an island called Insula Aurea, somewhere in the far eastern atlantic. I have that small sailing Yacht I bought last year from that man for almost

nothing, since it needed all of that fixing up. Well it's up and ready now. It's already loaded up on the trailer and ready to go."

"How may we meet you, father? You know everywhere is blocked off."

"The backroads are not," speaks the stressed voice of her father. "It will be a couple of days, since I must drive around so far out of my way, but may you and Eric meet me at the fourth catacomb exit by the old Federal Army cat-house ruins?"

"I think so," Adara says.

"Be there around twelve hundred, the day after tomorrow. If I'm not there, then sit tight, I'm on my way, but we all must move quickly."

"We will," Adara replies. "I love you."

"My father wants us to meet him the day after tomorrow, at the old Federal Army cat house ruins over by Rakeshin. Do you know the way through the catacombs to get there?"

"I certainly do," Eric replies.

"We're going far from here, and starting a new life. I can't wait to get out of here. This may be the land of my fathers, but it's all gone to the dogs now. I know there's better out there, better for me, better for you, and much better for us."

The two walk back toward the great chasm, moving toward the far rear into an isolated chamber. Here a man or immortal being, is seated upon a throne of what appears to be translucent gold. He wears a robe and hood of pure white. Around his head and over this hood is a golden diadem with alternating stones of ruby and emerald circling it. In his right hand he holds a double edged sword. In his left hand, what appears to be an ancient volume of some sort. He smiles warmly as the two approach him and bow.

"Hail, oh divine one, your humble servant at your service," Eric says.

“On the contrary, it is I who should bow before you,” replies the figure. “It is you who are the anointed one, sworn to surge forward, conquering the devouring enemy at hand.”

“Who is he?” asks Adara as they both stand.

“He is the Grand Clairvoyant, or High Priest. Only he possesses the almighty power to bless.”

In the light of the full moon that night, upon a large flat stone pedestal, Eric and Adara stand. Adara is doning in a calcimine robe, cloaked in a veil of mist. Eric, is donning a sacred robe of gold and sky blue, symbolizing eternity. Around the pedestal a great circle of lime is laid, some seventy fathoms across. The greatest and most valiant ones earning their titles via accomplishment in battle and life, take their place within the circle. Upon the opposite side of the pedestal stands the high priest. Within an opened clay lamp the dried belladonna rose is placed. The sacred flame is lit as the high priest swings it in all four directions, then around the couple, casting alluring smoke among the bystanders.

“Oh sacred spirits inside the mysterious realm among us, create thy own circle around this hallowed couple, granting them your divine protection. Allow them to witness the glory of achievement in their assigned duties fulfilled, according to law. We cordially invite you and the spirits of our ancestry, and mighty anointed guardians of Powell County, to join in this great union of hallowed heritage king and queen.”

As garlands of strawflowers are laid upon the necks of the couple, a nine inch diameter bronze chalice is picked up by the High Priest in his right hand, then filled with nearly thick, blood red wine. First he takes a long drought, then he passes it to his Chief Kraken assistant on either side, then from these Kraken over to the couple. The couple steps forward, first in a northward direction, pausing in the center of the hallowed circle, and raises the chalice toward the heavens.

Adara drinks first, handing it over into Eric's hand, who does the same. The process is repeated in each of the three additional directions.

"We salute the supreme God of the Universe, as we request his blessing upon this evening and upon this couple, and every person here in," speaks the high priest. The Chief Kraken by his side, repeats the words aloud.

The chief Kraken and the High Priest position alternating white and black candles every three feet around the diameter of the circle. These candles are lit as Eric and Adara join hands. The high priest binds the two hands with a thread of gold. Upon an altar of alabaster and jade, dried green grass is burned, symbolizing new life. Dried rose and purple tulip are cast upon the altar and set alight. The dried rose symbolizes eternal blood, and the purple tulip represents secular and spiritual royalty. A thin golden band is placed upon the couple's left hand finger. The High Priest raises both hands toward the moon.

"In the name of eternal divinity, and the sacred blood of our forefathers, do both of you pledge yourselves to one another, and one another only, so help you supreme Lord of Heaven?"

"We do," they both say.

"Do both of you pledge yourselves to one another, until death do you part, in the name of the supreme Lord of Heaven?"

"We do," they both say in unison.

"And should either of you violate these vows, you both understand where you do so at the peril of your mortal lives, so help you supreme Lord of Heaven?"

We do," they both say as they gaze into the flame upon the altar of sacrifice.

"Now turn to face the anointed congregation."

The couple turns to face the grand sanctuary.

“By the power invested in me, I now pronounce you the hallowed king and queen of Tallamh Geallta, the promised land!”

The onlookers raise their palms, chanting songs and reciting poetry prophesying the marriage years ago. Underneath the sheltering ledge, a sacred bonfire roars, around which those who stood within the circle dance. The battle horns sound, and the priests summon the tranquil winds of light and darkness, originating from deep inside the otherworld realm, and those avenging spirits of the same nature who ride upon these winds, to bless the couple; then move forth from the mountain summit, delivering incessant disaster and misfortune upon their sworn occupying enemies.

Chapter 12

Elysium Oasis

The following morning as a new sun breaks the rolling horizon, the fresh royal couple are escorted by a platoon of sacred guards called *Kraken Phantoms* from the grand sanctuary, down a secret corridor referred to as the *Hall of Enchantment*. Holes positioned inside the walls hold four feet long wooden torches every ninety feet, generating a hauntingly enrapturing display of dancing light for the first league of the trek. A sensation of spectral presence is heavy. Adara is utterly astonished at how quietly the rather large procession moves. Herself and Eric seem to generate the most noise as the massive procession walks.

As the crowd quietly and briskly move along, very audible echoing, base toned moans are heard emanating from a totally dark, seemingly massive stalactite chamber to the left. A cloud of

horrific stench makes filing past the entry space almost unbearable. Adara strains her eyes as she tries to make out some sort of form, but fails to do so inside the thick aura of impenetrable gloom.

"What is that?," she whispers to the High Priest.

"That is the chasm *Den of Despair*, where all of those deemed unworthy by court of law are cast. Their ultimate penalty is total darkness, delivered by a *Staff of Punity* bearing a small fragment of the sun upon one end. They are not entitled to the luxuries of accomplished life, so they are fed offal and carrion, mixed with the dung of man and beast. The urine of both serves to quench their raging unending thirst. They slumber on the cold damp stone of the chasm floor. They have only twelve feet of chain from the stone wall, back to ankle and neck shackles, and often fight over the choicest parts of the filth they are given, or the fresh meat provided by the death of their own. Only the strongest and most creative among them survive for any noteworthy time length."

The disturbed face of Adara lowers as she glares intensely into the darkened den, then rises to face the High Priest again, her eyes almost shedding tears.

"How are they ruled unworth, master?"

"They are prisoners seized from within the outer realm, who bear no cherished heritage, or valuable skills, nor possess adorned services to offer the kingdom. They also are our own who fail in fulfillment of assigned duties, or those who scheme to betray the divine kingdom."

"Are there women among the damned?," Adara asks, swallowing hard.

"More than a few, your highness," the High Priest speaks in a calm monotone.

"I am aware of services men might offer of value, but what about women?," Adara asks.

“The primary service of a woman is procreation, my fair lady, if she bears our patrimonial requirements of superficial specifics, intelligence, and admirable accomplishment. Otherwise, her service is simply to pleasure our most accomplished men within the priesthood, and to provide offspring for our blood sacrifice during the fabulous *Oak Moon* celebration, where she actually lives a life of opulent luxury inside our most hallowed *Grand Oasis* temple complex. When she no longer bears a capacity for carnal pleasure or birthing sacrificial offspring, then and only then, is she damned into the terrible Den of Despair.”

The corridor winds on as the deep toned moans and the grotesque stench wanes in the rear distance. Soon a sound of falling water is heard, and an opening of dazzling golden light appears from somewhere in the stone wall, illuminating the entire corridor passageway up unto the next sharp left hand turn in the corridor pathway. The scent now is one of jazmine and roses, mixed with wisteria and lemon of magnolia. Here is a clear, slightly blue green cesspool inside a cave chamber complex. Above is a circle shaped opening, funneling dazzling golden rays of sunlight in beams far too brilliant for one to hold his gaze upon. Adara inhales deeply the fumes, sensing an additional sweet aroma remarkably similar to Polianthes Tuberose.

“What is the smell?,” she asks the High Priest.

“Ambrosia Water Carnation,” he informs her. “It's a gift from the springtime Phantom of Fertility. If one inhales much, he will not leave the cesspool for a year, unless forced to do so. You, my queen, and your dear husband have a sacred journey to make, however. There will be plenty of future time for you and the king to enjoy rest and relaxation for a year’s duration.”

“The water seems so nice and relaxing,” speaks Adara as she eases down into the gently sloping cesspool. “The falling water on the opposite side of this cesspool seems to be drawing me inward. It's an urge almost impossible to resist.”

Several Kraken reach out to grab her, pulling her backward from within the gently flowing water, restraining her from returning inside.

"We must journey onward," says the High Priest, "all future destiny awaits."

The group moves from the *Chamber of Enlightenment*, back into the winding corridor. Now the way is one of intrepid darkness and little light. The torch light is gone, but from somewhere a tiny ray gently lights the way. Many areas of the corridor are covered by bizarre native paintings and symbols. Many seem to display scenes of individuals out in the field, and round orbs descending down from the skies.

Other scenes display these same individuals accompanied by disturbing octopus-like entities from beyond. There are battle scenes, scenes of beheading, and blood. There are also scenes of the sun and sunlight, crops, and people dancing. One scene displays two large groups meeting, shaking hands, and smoking long pipes. Adara is very curious, but she feels there is no time to inquire about these catacomb pictographs. Suddenly she senses the corridor is on an incline. Still it meanders along, giving one a sensation of being caught up inside a maze-like complex. A veil of exhaustion covering her is almost unbearable.

"How much longer, sir?," Adara gasps toward the High Priest.

"Until the divine light reveals itself. Here we shall reside until your new escort into the elegant elysium dimension beyond reveals himself."

As the corridor continues to meander into an upward climb, soon it pauses upon what appears as a zigzagging stone staircase upward. With the Grand Master tactfully guiding the High Priest in company with his Chief Kraken, Adara and Eric king and queen at the helm; the entire troop proceeds forward along the limestone stairs, heading upward. Finally as it shatters the despairing

gloom within from high above, rays of light slash the bleakness, causing heavy hearts to sing, and saddened eyes to dry.

"Is that our point of exit, master?," gasps Adara toward the High Priest.

"That is the mesmerizing point where all future destiny commences," says the High Priest.

All Adara can do is move toward the brilliant light, focusing on success at all costs. Nothing shall remove her mind from the task at hand. As she and her husband step forward, birthing from deep inside the womb of the earth, two restraining hands catch them atop the left shoulder.

"We await inside the safety of the shadows," the High Priest says.

Soon a brand new sky blue F150 pulls up, with a trailer hauling a sizable yacht. The sail mast is folded backward, and still it appears almost too large for the trailer.

"Father has arrived," Adara informs the High Priest and his guardian Chief Kraken.

Eric suddenly turns to face the High Priest with an air of rigid stoicism on his face.

"I shall now travel far into our Elysium heritage paradise, where I shall build a place for you and every sincere follower. Move forth my dear children, throughout Powell County, the state of Tennessee, the nation, and the earth abroad, spreading the precious word of true history, liberty, and sacred constitution. One day in a not so distant future epoch, the stability of earth your mighty army shall restore in a future time. Then shall I return, rejoicing with the company of you all, in glorious celebration of our supreme victory over genetic darkness and gross social-economic degeneration. Hear me now, my dearest, the Kingdom of Light shall endure for infinity. Long live the blessed Kingdom of Lyonesse!"

The crowd inside the cave entrance standing on the stairway chant in unison as the two turn, walking into the brilliant sunlight, toward the truck with the yacht on its trailer.

"Long live the Kingdom of Lyonesse! Long live the Kingdom of Lyonesse!"

“Father, it seems as if it's been so long!,” Adara says as she rushes up, hugging his neck.

“Climb inside, we must get going immediately. We have no time to spare. The interstate is still open and traffic is passable. There are no roadblocks as of yet. The past week sure has been one hell of a week. That’s all I have to say.”

“Look father!,” Adarea tells him with glowing smiles as she shows him her ring. “Eric and myself are man and wife now. Not only that, we are the king and queen of Lyonesse!”

Her father gasps.

“Yes I know, but we have no time to celebrate. Our great task is not complete as of yet.”

Absolum pulls the truck out, heading down a narrow winding road. It feels really good simply to be free and out on the open road. Nobody hardly speaks a word. Time flies by. They are on Interstate seventy five, southbound.

“It truly feels fabulous to be out on the open road,” says Absolum.

“Where is mother?,” Adara asks.

“She’s fine,” her father says. “She is happy as I myself am, that we both could be a part in this drama involving you two uniting.”

“What will cheer me up,” Eric says, “is when the kingdom of Lyonesse finally retakes Powell County, then advances to seize the neighboring counties, and eventually the entire state of Tennessee. Once we form a valid viable third political party, with the left foot standing solid among the masses, and the right foot rooted firmly on constitutional law; we shall move forward with our hallowed doctrine in our left hands, while swinging a terrible swift sword in our right. Forward we shall march into infinity, trampling out the degeneration, darkness, and gloom, slashing it into bits as we shout hosanna with a mighty hurrah, allowing the magnificent light of glittering accomplishment and her anointed children, to shine brilliantly for a timeless duration!”

The ride continues southbound into South Carolina, through the many open fields, rolling woodlands, small towns and hamlets.

"It certainly feels fine to be far from disaster and its arresting hand. Once we're off this treacherous land and on our way to paradise, no feeling on earth will ever match it," Absolum says.

After what feels like a long drive, soon they are riding on a long bridge over marsh-like water. When they exit the bridge, a sign with a large peach in its center stands before them to the right, with the words written in bold, *Welcome to the State of Georgia.*

"The land of peaches is fine by me!," Eric laughs.

"But it shall never beat the land of milk and honey!," Adara replies.

The state of Georgia passes by faster than South Carolina. Again it feels like they are driving across marsh-lands connected by a series of bridges. A sign bearing the words in bold, *Welcome to the sunny state of Florida* pops up all too soon, yet somewhat farther to the right than the Georgia sign.

Time slows down once they reach Florida. It takes forever for them to finally pass Jacksonville by. Eventually they need to stop for gas. Absolum pulls up beside the gas-pump. He steps inside the Circle K to pay. As he is pumping, a Harley rider pulls up beside him. Absolum glances over, spotting his faded jeans, his boots, his leather vest, his shoulder length hair and bewhiskered face.

"Nice boat you got there," the man says with a half smile on his face as he glares.

"Thanks," Absolum tells him as he continues pumping.

The biker gets off his Harley, walking around the boat and trailer.

“Hmm,” the biker says, “Tennessee,” the biker huffs as he glances at the tags. “ I haven't been there in a while.”

“It's a nice place,” Absolum says to him as he pumps, “You should go there.”

The biker smiles broadly

“It must depend on what specific part of Tennessee you're in. According to the news, they are raising hell in Tennessee.”

“Oh yeah?,” Absolum replies, trying not to appear nervous.

“It's about all of this UN garbage. The traditionalists don’t want it. None of my crew don’t want it, and understand the feelings. I ride with the *Raging Falcons.* We don’t roll with the sheeple either. We were born to be rebels. We’ve been rebels all of our lives. We’ve sworn to die rebels. Sovereignty is for all eternity, man! Lucky for us, down here in Florida we have a governor who isn’t up for much of this UN trash. As long as we can keep him in, we’ll all be O.K., I suppose. Just in case he leaves, and a pig takes his place, we’re getting ready for all out military action here too.”

“Wow, I’m glad you told me this, otherwise I’d never have known,” Absolum replies.

“Yeah, it's getting crazy in America, man,” says the biker. “A bunch of our boys are talking about riding into Tennessee. They put some county there called Powell County and three others, under martial law. The special forces have moved in, but those mountain people are putting up one hell of a fight. It's house to house combat right now up there. Some organization called the Kingdom of Lionese is taking over. Can you believe that, man? They are beating back the US special forces!”

“Really?,” Absalom laughs.

“I’ll tell you what, man, I was in the military back in ‘89. It was a different crowd back then,” the biker says. “When we were sent out to do a job, we got it done. We were not a bunch of whimpering, snivel nosed, pajama wearing pansies, who didn’t even know if he was a man or a woman. That's what is going on now. You have a bunch of milk sops fighting real men. That’s why the US military is losing in Tennessee. They were hauling ass out of Iraq and Afghanistan, man. America needs a return of manhood. A puffy-poo ain't gonna do it, you know that much.”

“Oh yeah?,” Absolum chuckled.

“I don’t know what things are coming too.” the biker sighs. “Maybe I should just leave America, man. Lots of people are these days. I read where the mass movement of expatriatism hasn’t been greater since way back when the Civil War ended. Maybe I should just get me a boat like you’ve got there, and just drift out at sea, to some island or something.”

“Well, I’m glad you’ve told me all of this. I’m going to put out on the beaches around here, and play for a while, myself. I don’t believe in fighting unless I have to, but life was meant to be enjoyed,” Absolum says as he pumps in his final drop. He walks back toward the door of his truck, turning toward the biker. “You take care now, fellow.”

“Same to you, same to you,” the biker says as he waves, straddling his Harley.

The truck and the trailer eases out, pausing before the interstate. Absalom sighs deeply.

“That sure was a close one. I was ready to move on, I tell you.”

“What was he saying? I couldn’t understand everything,” Eric askes.

“He says they’ve sent in the military back home. It was all over the news. He didn’t say a word about any of us, however. The good news is that we are winning, so he claimed the news media was saying.”

The truck and the trailer move on past Jacksonville, heading southward on interstate ninety five now. Not much is said as the ride continues. A sign to the right mentions Pompano, and a boat ramp. Absolum makes a left turn down the road, driving several miles until another sign mentioned a boat ramp. He pulls the truck and trailer near a marina building, while Eric and Adara sit waiting. In a few minutes he comes back outside of the marina. He steps back inside the truck, then movies the trailer forward.

It was soon obvious a ramp into the shallow sea was positioned ahead. The truck and trailer swing around, and backs up until the trailer is positioned in the water. Eric and Absolum get out and unstrap the boat. Adara steps out and gets on board as the boat bounces around in the sloshing water. Absolum and Eric stand the sailing mast up by pulling on the heavy lines, then lock it down. Absolum swings the truck and trailer back around, parking it behind the marina. He walks back out where the boat was, stepping inside.

"What will happen with the truck?," Adara asks.

"Your mother will ride out here with a friend, and will drive the truck and trailer back. We all must move as quickly into place with this project as it is possible to do. We are under a drastic obligation to beat the competition in discovering any changes have been made."

The small yacht has a fresh load of fuel and is ready to go. Enough beans, rice, canned meat, and canned vegetables were packed. Silver and gold coins are carefully stacked inside the hold. All is set and ready to go on for the long term.

"Where exactly are we headed?," Eric asks in earnest.

"53.4129° North by 8.2439° West " Absolum informs him. "Don't fret over these directions. Everything has been researched out and the nautical compass set. This deal is on, and there is no such thing as turning back now."

Away the boat heads eastbound on the water, far past the swimmers, the fishing piers, the other sailing vessels, the fish and shrimp trawlers. Only the gulls and the albatross fly above. After the boat rises and dips along for a while, these too were out of sight. There are loads of wildlife in the water more than one hundred miles out from shore such as, large purple jellyfish, octopus and squid large as the boat is, but they also see a bloated horse carcass, and a few dead goats. It seems like every thousand feet out for a while they spy a dead cow, a giraffe, even an elephant on one occasion. All attempts at logic in this situation lead on to a dead end.

After a few days they were many more miles out. Around 0300 the water stills and is nearly glass-like and crystal clear. It seems as if the water and the sky blend where the horizon is supposed to be. Everybody is hoping to do some night fishing, so Eric ties his waterproof hundred thousand candle powered handheld spotlight on a wire, dangling it underneath the yacht. It seems like the light illuminates maybe a fifteen foot radius around the yacht. Somehow the light merges with the full moonlight, granting the underwater illumination far more reach.

Then the small crew witnesses something that terrifies them. A massive silhouette passes underneath the yacht that dwarfs the boat frame tremendously. The general shape seems a type of oval.

“What on earth is it?,” Eric stammers as he speaks.

“Awe, the Lemurians keep watch o’er the good folks on Insula Aurea de Hallelujah Land, where we’re beaching before long,” says Absolum, “ Don’t be afraid.”

A light appears where the horizon is supposed to be. It begins small, then grows until they can see it is a brilliant orange orb. It moves toward them over the water, then it appears to pause over the water for a few minutes. It suddenly drops and is gone in a virtual instant.

“There again,” says Absolum, “it's only our friendly protectors, the Lemurians, conducting an air investigation.”

In the distance they can hear rolling thunder. There are zigzagging flashes of lightning slashing the night sky. They can hear the howl of a wind, although it doesn’t seem to push exceedingly hard on the boat. This howl almost seems like an intimidating voice. The yacht is moving, but flashes of light in multicolored waves pass the sailing yacht by as it rises, falls, and rocks along.

The storm seems to pass quickly. Now the yacht feels perfectly still in a crystal clear sea of sky blue and turquoise. They can gaze deeply into the water, seeing eerie formations, almost appearing as mysterious man-made stone structures far down on the sea bottom. What was exceedingly strange is that the yacht was still miles from any type of shore line, according to the small radar screen on board. What kind of place might this be? The compass is in a spin. Location determination at the moment, is out of the question.

Suddenly in the night, when the sky above twinkles with stars, brilliant drops of intense emerald commence to shower down. What on earth kind of rain was this? When it falls upon the yacht there is no smoke or steam*, so it must not be acidic*, Eric thinks. In the distance all around there are low pitched voices humming, and those of children laughing. Some voices seem as if they are lashing out angrily, in feminine chorus nobody could understand. An abrupt fog emerged from the sea. While consumed inside this thick fog, the yacht suddenly runs aground.

Absolum cast anchor in the shallow water and the three step up onto dry land. The fog is so thick, they can’t see any farther than a few feet in front.

“Are we at the right place?,” Adara asks her father.

“The gauges were mysteriously arrayed, but we were heading in the right direction,” he replies. “Let's keep walking forward.”

The three feel they walk in beach sand, moving on a slanted upward incline. They continue walking until the fog gradually clears. After moving what feels to be some ninety yards gradually upward, they can view where they are overlooking an expansive unique type of metropolis environment.

Down below are immaculately laid tulip, daffodil, carnation, and rose gardens. From all appearances squash, corn, pumpkins, and other carefully designed vegetable gardens of every type, lay beyond that. In between these gardens run natural springs of water. A mist emerges from several of these springs, suggesting where the water is naturally heated. These streams seem to run on into the general metropolis area.

Absolum picks up his binoculars from around his neck. He can clearly visualize where there are outdoor gymnasiums for exercise. Pools surrounded by flower gardens, and decorated with elegant sculpture are located near carefully maintained parks. Absolum turns to the left and the right, seeing running tracks, tracks for racing horses, and vehicles of various types.

“This place is beyond belief,” he gasps.

He hands the binoculars over to Adara, who turns from side to side, gasping;

“Wow!,” she says, “it's unbelievable.”

She hands the binoculares over to Eric.

Eric focuses his gaze more upon the island center than the other two. Here there are grand Doric classical styled palaces. Each palace has a military guard, where the doors and entryways are carefully guarded. Obviously, he thinks, this must be where the government and the military headquarters are located. There appears to be numerous chateau surrounded by fields and flowers scattered outside of the island center. Huge classical styled temples astonishingly similar to the First Baptist Church back in Powell County are located in various places throughout the general

metropolis area. Eric also notices numerous elegantly designed effigies near the temple complex, but he doesn't recognize who these effigies are depicting.

“This truly is an amazing place,” Eric says as he continues to gaze. “I can see why your cousin called it the world’s outer edge. I doubt there is no place anywhere like it.”

For some reason what appears as being a primary temple complex catches Eric’s eye, holding it. It is a massive classical Doric structure covered in silver, with alluring golden figurine highlights. Eric is standing facing directly into the temple complex itself, from this rather high hill by the beach. Carefully he zooms the military spec binoculars. From what he can discern, the inside appears to have ivory pews, with the walls plated in pure gold.

He zooms the binoculars even more. The chandeliers, candle, and light holders are carefully crafted of inlaid silver from all appearances to the best he can ascertain.

Out from this temple inside a foreground of its own, is a rather large robed female marble effigy standing inside a chariot, drawn by six winged horses. This scene is surrounded by a circle of female pixie riding dolphins. Surrounding the palace itself are golden statues of ten crowned and robed kings. He fails to recognize any of these figures, but yet, can’t believe the general artistry in what his eyes are beholding.

“From the general design I find in everything we can zoom up in these binoculars, these people must have astonishing organizational and reasoning abilities. They also seem to possess a certain spiritual enlightenment accompanied by some form of new technology,” Eric exclaims.

“Cousin usually knows what he is doing when he makes a choice to relocate away from somewhere, that’s for sure.” Absolum replies.

“Where is he going to meet with us,” Adara asks.

“Somewhere near the primary temple complex,” her father replies.

“I think I spotted that,” Eric returns.

Eric raises the binoculars back to his eyes.

“My Lord in heaven above,” he suddenly gasps.

“What? What? What!,” Absolum gasps in a sudden whisper.

“Did you notice the people here?,” Eric inquires.

“Not particularly, what about them?,” Absolum spouts.

“Everybody here appears taller than average back home, maybe by at least six inches, and more in certain instances. Every person’s body, male and female alike, appear as finely chiseled specimens of absolute perfection. Their skin is clear and without blemish, from what I can ascertain. It's very interesting that the primary hair color here is crimson and auburn.”

He turned the eye focus and the zoom knob on the binoculars.

“I can’t quite make out the eye colors,” Eric gasps as he twists and gazes through the eye pieces.

“Your description of these people almost seem like some sort of priesthood , or a selected invoker of divine powers with some type of genetic qualifier among these people here on this island,” Absolum says.

“I don’t know, but there’s a huge temple complex in the metropolis center here, for sure,” Eric replies.

“What are we going to do now?,” asks Adara.

“I guess we’ll begin walking down this hill toward the primary palace there,” Absolum replies.

The three begin walking down the sloping stony outcrop, toward the natural streams, gardens, and fields. Making their way down the hill among the boulders and stones is a struggle, with the deep holes hiding in the grass, the cat claw thorns, and stones rolling out beneath their feet,

But at long last they are on relatively flat ground. The aroma immediately striking them in their faces is of lemon magnolia and jasmine. They all inhale deeply as they move forward along, toward the majestic flower gardens and the streams.

The experience is utterly breathtaking already. They can only imagine what the palace up close and comfortable would appear like, not to mention the metropolis at large. A well worn path courses around extensive flower gardens, filled with large sun flowers, tulips, angel trumpets, azalea, gladiolas, daffodils, and more. Coursing through these fields are hedges and walkways of cobblestone and red bricks.

In the center is a huge pond filled with lilies, heart leaves, arrowhead, and blue lotus, with a natural waterfall across in the distance. A fine mist arises from the water, sweeping o'er the flowers and the gardencomplex. Surrounding this large clover leaf shaped pond, are weeping willows, dogwoods, hollys, and various oaks. Here and there around the pond placed strategically among the trees, is a stone bench. Before these benches, surrounded by tulips, ferns, and gladiolas, are robed female and male statues, many wearing laurels of oak leaf and holly.

"Since oak and holly signify royalty and spirituality, these elegantly crafted marble figures must be those of long past rulers, high priests, and philosophers," Adara says.

"Look at the strange writing on the base of these statues," Absolum says. "It looks like a cross between Sumarian and runes."

"I'll wager where the meanings are similar," Eric speaks up and says.

"Well, all of this pondering is nice, but we need to stick with the game plan. We must make it back to that main trail, and on toward that primary palace complex. From up on that hill, looking through these binoculars, that palace doesn't seem far away. I know these Vortex Razor HD

binoculars rank among the best. I can literally read a dime from a thousand yards out, but I am not sure they are good enough to make such a long walk seem so short."

The three walk back toward the well worn footpath they once walked on, but seem to be lost within a mysterious bedazzling maze of some sort among the hedges. The eerie sensation swelling inside Addara's heart, is one of not wanting to ever exit the garden. There seems to be soft whispering child-like voices singing songs on the garden breeze. Eric gazes all around bearing an expression of astonishment, yet seeing nothing. He finds himself glancing backward at Adara, who is lagging behind him and Absolum.

"Come on Adara," Eric says to her, "you must keep up, babe."

"These sculptures and this artwork are so beautiful, Eric," Adara gasps as she gazes around, "It really is tough to leave this place. Look!," she gasps as she points.

To the right side standing among a bed of petunias, is a large three dimensional portrait crafted from carefully trimmed glass-like stone, of a hummingbird sipping from a lotus lily. To the left is an immensely flashy three dimensional portrait of a kaleidoscopic butterfly, where the colors actually rotate, giving it a lifelike quality. The sensation conveyed by such scenery is one of being able to thrive for eternity in such a place. Every once in a while there are peach, apple, mulberry, and persimmon trees with hanging fruit. Even the thorns found inside the garden bear mulberry types of fruit. The three pause to take their fill.

"I see what you mean about being able to thrive here for eternity," Eric announces as he picks peaches and berries to eat. " Look at the thick weeping willow there! Underneath its branches could be our new home."

The raspy call of a bird above sounds all over the garden, it seems. The three suddenly glance upward. There are seven ravens flying and seemingly circling the garden parameters. The

movements of these birds and their circling flight patterns appear to give indication of something unseen.

"We must get a move on. Potential danger may lurk in this garden environment," Absolum announces. "I can't imagine where this maze we are inside of ends. I only want to make it back on track."

"Look!," speaks Adara as she points upward, " one of the raven flies above us, then moves outward, always returning. I think he wants us to follow."

"We have nothing to lose right about now. Let us move along inside this great maze in the direction of the bird's flight."

The three follow along the trail inside the maze, meandering in the bird's direction. Seemingly in no time they are standing on the edge of the great metropolis, gazing in the direction of this magnificent primary temple complex. It is as if they were almost there all along, but not quite.

The view as they stand emanates an emotional and intellectual sensation that is utterly staggering. The feeling is one of divinity residing inside the metropolis midst. Here reasoning and creativity knows no limitations. No art or display anywhere about the place reflects signs of degeneration or debauchery, to any degree.

The rather unique people entering the primary palace foyer replace double breasted suits and ties with flawless ankle length white linen togas. Each person was given a leather bound book covered in pictographs of valiant soldiers carrying shields on white stallions, with the brilliant lightning sun reaching outward from behind him, where they pause before a niche displaying some sort of revered effigy standing among mounds of carnations and roses. This book is open and some form of verse recites aloud in a language neither of the three could comprehend, yet sounds shockingly like the ceremonial language spoken inside the catacombs of Powell County.

A priest donning a hooded toga of emerald with golden trim, and around his waist an ancient lavender hued belt of velvet-like dragon skin, steps forward from the fore of lesser priests. He approaches the three, removing his hood. To the astonishment of the three, it was Jimbo himself.

Absolum hugs him with all of his might.

“Jimbo, it's been so long, my dearest cousin. Surely you were my favorite.”

“It's been a long while. I witnessed the degeneration found throughout the western world at large, but nowhere more pronounced than in America. All of America’s heritage traditions are being wasted, only to be replaced by a barbarian, best-like monstrosity regulated by a rude collectivist, atheistic idealism, rather than by sanctified vision enveloped in lucid reason and logic,” Jimbo smiles as he speaks.

“It truly disgusts me,” Absolum tells him.

Jimbo approaches Eric, shaking his hand.

“This is the great lucid hope, the shining savior of Tallamh Geallta, our anointed heritage promised land. He was crowned King, and his queen, Adara, is my own daughter.”

Adara extends her pallid hand forward. Jimbo smiles, bowing as he takes it into his extended right hand.

“A pleasure to meet such astonishing individuals. I understand the greatest battle for patrimony and individual liberty is on, even as we speak,” Eric says. “I fully comprehend your situation. No king of our heritage realm should stand outside of our priesthood, nor upon any financial ground outside of wealth and glory.”

Jimbo turns from Addara to Absolum.

“The program will proceed forward as such. Your son-in-law and his ever attending wife, your daughter, will sign up to begin training for the priesthood. The process takes a twelve year

minimum, with allowances stretching outward until nineteen years have passed. At the same time they will build a business empire, assisted by the experienced and most successful within the anointed priesthood. Understand that being successful in business enterprise is a requirement.

"Once a position of High Priest has been obtained conjunctively with financial excellence, qualifies our glorious king to return into the mortal realm, to assume his throne of leadership, supervising the finalizing universal purge of degenerative elements from inside our heritage landscape. What magnificent day that will surely be, my wonderful dear family. Today we shall toast the sun and the spirit guardians of the four directions. May our success and the Kingdom of Tallamh Geallta, live for all infinity!"

"May the Kingdom of Lyonesse, the glorious Tallamah Geallta, endure the ages, my dear cousin!," returns Absolum as he fills flower blossom shaped crystal cups full with an island euphoric herbal nectar said to be born from among the very stars of heaven.

When the cups are filled, each individual receives one in their right hand.

"Here's to the supreme God of the Universe, financial accomplishment, and the Kingdom of Lyonesse!," they all speak in unison as they hoist their cups high toward the sky.

"Long live Lyonesse valor, and planet earth's adoration for the chosen ones!"

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Powell County Tennessee

The ferocious battle for county indefinite sovereignty rages on. The KFR, striking hard and fading away into the surrounding mountains, goes up against an imposing US military who eventually combines with UN forces. This is a brutal unconventional asymetric war of systemic computer hacks, terrorism, booby traps, brutal ambush, and house to house combat. These subversive techniques are taught and studied deep inside the landscape catacombs.

Opposition forces are utterly mystified as to how fighting men can simply vanish away into the hills. Many times areas on the ground holding military equipment not under guard, strangely hold no equipment when UN and US soldiers return. Strategists for the invaders figure the partisan insurgency, as they label heritage locals, is arming itself with more advanced military hardware. Eventually UN and US soldiers are pushed out of Powell County, then out of the surrounding counties. Now there is a libertarian buffer zone surrounding a primary oasis tract 0f constitutionally endorsed freedom.

Inside the buffer zone heritage citizens initiate another war to rid the sacred promised track of all out-lander populations not in total compliance with local traditions, and a freeborn political agenda where an individual's rights rule supreme. There are frequent midnight house burnings, random shootings, and people being dragged from their homes to wind up dangling from a nearby limb. In the end, all foreigners and rude protestors simply melt away into the hazy mountain mist.

As the patrimonial population rebuilds, a glorious third party of the individual person is organizing to reign supreme throughout Powell County and the buffer zone area. Politically connected intellectual organizations are linking up with every Tennessee county, reaching far beyond, deep into Texas and several Southwestern states. Northwestern states have expressed

sudden interest in making connections. Even states such as Alaska, Vermont, North and South Dakota, and Ohio are reaching out to embrace this astonishing glitter of individualist excellence.

To join, individuals are evaluated and separated into groups such as voters, laborers, tradesmen or skills people, and potential business people. Those who are not evaluated as being successful in business, work inside their properly assigned groups, and are pushed to at least apprentice into a needed trade, service, or skill group. Those deemed as possessing business skills are assisted in developing that business endeavor to the fullest. This way employment opportunities are created, and the superior party gains an economic ground base support, with only a ten percent tax going back to the party. A full ninety percent is granted to the business owner.

Production facilities processing raw goods and hardware, establish stores trading in these materials. Should a citizen member inside these newly liberated heritage areas, need resources such as groceries and hardware for example, instead of money one may have a work time span determined from a value translation of these goods into dollars and labor time. This work time is pulled at a local factory producing the goods or one owning the store. If one is in possession of a needed skill, then his work time is shortened based on a pay rate in this skill area.

The third party issues a currency based on the value of product produced or time worked. Gradually citizen poverty imposed through commanded installment fees made on self-serving unsupervised congressional loans to the Federal Reserve, is lifted because areas dominated by the third party are liberated by the Divine Stars and The Cross, as this new currency is labeled and stamped. Seemingly overnight, vitality and wealth is restored to the broad Tennessee landscape, causing more states southward and those throughout the heartland areas, to desire jettisoning all imposed policies of UN and District of Columbia universal collectivism. At long

last since the Civil War era, total freedom of individual proletariat choice is finally reigning supreme throughout the American landscape!

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